

Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School Horncastle



Exams Policy

Approved By:

Full Governors

Adopted by the Full Governing Body on:

24/09/2018

Review Frequency:

Annually

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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 when the new JCQ Instructions for Exams (ICE document) is released

The exams policy will be reviewed by the exams officer and presented to 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 external exams and oversees internal 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.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication *A guide to the special consideration process*.

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

- 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 any post results service requests to the exam boards.

Subject Leaders/Teacher in charge of the subject are 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 accurate information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Subject Leader/Teacher in charge of the subject and/or Exams Officer.

The **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)** 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 for access arrangements (if required).
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

Senior 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 Exams Officer 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 Exams Office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- confirmation 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.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the heads of department in consultation with their department and link SLT. The Head of Centre will make decisions on qualifications where necessary.

The types of qualifications offered are: GCSEs; GCEs; Extended Projects; LIBF level 2 and 3 exams; Cambridge Admission testing qualifications such as TSA, CAT, BMAT, STEP and the new suite of university admissions tests introduced in 2016.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in Queen Elizabeth Grammar School's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the Exams Officer must be informed by 1st July so that statements of intent can be filled in for the exam boards to ensure the department is registered for any preliminary material and circulars which may be pertinent to the new course.

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

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the head of department in consultation with the subject teacher and occasionally the exams officer.

Exam series

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled and dates entered on the school calendar at the start of the school year.

External exams and assessments are scheduled by the awarding bodies in consultation with JCQ. The main external exams at QEGS are held in the June series but University entrance tests and some resits of GCSEs will take place in the November and January series respectively. LIBF written exams are scheduled in January and March.

Internal exams operate under external exam conditions.

The Exams Officer in consultation with the SLT decides which exam series are used in the centre.

The centre does offer some LIBF assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments will be scheduled only in windows agreed between the Exams Officer, School Administrator and the Subject Teacher.

Exam timetables

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

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. This will be dealt with on a case by case basis by the Exams Officer and/or the Head of Centre.

The centre only accepts entries from private candidates who have previously been taught at the school, or at the Head of Centre's discretion.

The centre acts as an exams centre occasionally for other organisations, such as with the ABRSM music exams.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email but reminders are put on the staff noticeboard and given at briefing meetings.

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

GCSE re-sits/retakes are only allowed in Maths and English if candidates have met the criteria for entry to QEGS but wish to improve their results. No other GCSE re-sits/retakes are allowed.

A level re-sits/retakes are allowed.

Re-sit decisions will be made by the candidates in consultation with their subject teachers and/or Subject Leaders.

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 exams series.

External exam entry fees for courses undertaken within the taught curriculum are paid by the centre. Extra assessments requested by the candidates will be paid for by the candidates.

Late entry or amendment fees made outside of the time allowed by awarding bodies are paid by either the centre, department, or candidates. (Who takes ownership of these will be decided by the Head of Centre and/or Exams Officer on a case by case basis).

Fee reimbursements are not currently 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 candidates (except for the LIBF Level 3 qualification where resit opportunities are built into the course costs).

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 exams officer working with the SENCO.

Access arrangements

The SENCO 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 requirement is determined by the SENCO.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's Access Arrangement 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 school administrator.

Invigilation and support for Access Arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the senior invigilator with assistance from the Exams Officer and SENCO as required.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer in conjunction with the SLT.

Contingency plans are available via the school intranet's K drive and hard copies are always displayed in the Exams Office. These are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Private candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Managing invigilators

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations unless in an emergency when trained centre staff will invigilate.

These invigilators will be used for internal mock exams and/or external exams

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Head of Centre delegated to the Exams Officer and the Director of Finance and Resources.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the personnel administrator in the School Office.

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

Invigilator rates of pay are in accordance with the published job description which has been subject to job evaluation and aligns with national pay scales.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer working with the Senior Invigilator, School Administrator and Director of Finance and Resources.

Malpractice

The Head of Centre in consultation with the Exams Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam days

The School Administrator will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users. The Exams Officer will make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements in advance.

The Exams Officer, Senior Invigilator or Invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff should be present before the start of the exam outside the exam room to talk to candidates. The external exam rooms are all under JCQ regulations. Photocards are used 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 Subject Leaders in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 48 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 the Senior Invigilator.

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 Exams Officer.

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. 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 prohibited 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 Exams Officer and Senior Invigilator.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Exams Officer and/or Senior Invigilator is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

Clash candidates

The Senior Invigilator will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts and identifying a secure venue. The Exams Officer will inform them of the arrangements in place in advance of the exam series and arrange 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 Exam Officer 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.

Internal assessment

It is the duty of Subject Leaders 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 exams office on SIMS by the subject teacher and should be checked by the appropriate Subject Leader prior to the given deadline date. 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) and EAR document, a copy of which is located on the K drive and in the exams office.

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days,

- in person at the centre
- where a known absence is recorded for results day the candidate may request their results to be emailed to either themselves or their parents/guardians at the pre-designated email address we have recorded on SIMS.

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 Exams Officer and arrangements are always published on the website and communicated to parents.

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

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. Any enquiries will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) and EAR document, a copy of which is located on the K drive and in the exams office.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer, following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may request the return of written exam papers within the JCQ deadlines for the exam series.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For both the consent of candidates must be obtained.

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates

- in person at the centre
- by post to their home address (candidates to provide a 'signed for' self-addressed envelope or the appropriate fee)

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.

Certificates for the June series will be available in the Centre from December.

The Centre retains certificates for 1 year in accordance with the JCQ regulations and then they are required to be destroyed. An email will be sent to the contact email address we hold on SIMS at least a month before this deadline to allow arrangements to be made for collection or 'signed for' envelopes to be sent to school for despatch of the certificates to their home address.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. The awarding bodies will only issue a transcript of results if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred. Full details of how to obtain these and the relevant costs can be found on the exam boards websites.