



EXAMINATIONS POLICY

Objective

To ensure that:

- An efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all users is in place
- Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities in a calm and organised environment
- Students undertake examinations knowing what is expected of them in terms of preparation and behaviour
- Staff understand fully their obligations and responsibilities with relation to examinations
- The school meets the requirements of examination security and is properly equipped to undertake the administration of examinations, including data processing and a results service.

Accountability of departments

The Head of Department takes responsibility for exam entries / withdrawals etc, advising the Exams Officer appropriately and in good time to ensure deadlines are met.

Entries

In September the Exams Officer will circulate to all departments the board and specification used by that department. This must be checked, signed and returned to the Exams Officer by the Head of Department, along with information about estimated entry numbers and proposed dates for modular exam entries.

All candidates will be entered by the due date set by the board. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the correct lists are issued to the Exams Officer.

Amendments

Withdrawals, tier changes or transfers between full and short courses will be accepted by the Exams Officer up to the date set by the board. These must be submitted to the Exams Officer in writing. Any late withdrawals/entries except in exceptional circumstances may be charged to the department.

External exams

The Exams Officer is responsible for the organisation and conduct of all external exams.

- Final confirmation of entry numbers and levels will be made with the Head of Department
- All exam papers will be counted in by the Exams Officer and locked away. The School Reception staff will advise the Exams Officer of the delivery of exams materials.
- The Head of Department will be present at the start of each subject exam and will usually assist in invigilating the exam to support the invigilators in ensuring good discipline and conduct during the exam. S/he will remain in the exam at least until one hour from the published start time of the exam.
- No teachers are permitted in the exam room except to assist with seating the candidates, in which case they must not look at the exam paper.
- No exam papers can be removed from the exam room except by the Exams Officer.
- All exams will be conducted according to the rules laid down by JCQ, the IB and exam boards. The exam will be run within the start and finish times determined by the exam board.
- Any misconduct or irregularity must be reported to the Exams Officer by the Lead Invigilator as soon as possible, who will then inform the exam board concerned.
- In the absence of the Exams Officer at the end of any exam, papers will be collected by the Lead Invigilator and locked in the Exam Cupboard.
- Any students taking exams that clash will be advised by the Exams Officer of any special arrangements for their exams. Any clash candidates needing to take exams at times other than the scheduled times must be supervised at all times and arrangements agreed in advance with the exam boards, if necessary.

Coursework/Estimated Grades

It is the responsibility of each department to ensure all coursework/estimated grades are despatched at the correct time. The Head of Department must supply the information and sample work to the Exams Officer as requested. Coursework will be despatched from the Post Office, with a proof of posting receipt obtained.

Internal Examinations

- Head of Department will be responsible for the overview of the organisation of any exams conducted in lesson time.
- Internal exams conducted formally to give students an experience of exam conditions will be managed by the Exams Officer and invigilated by the invigilation team. Each department is responsible for producing exam papers, suitable for the time slot allocated to their subject. The Head of Department will join the invigilators in ensuring discipline and good conduct during the exam.

Despatch of exam scripts

The school will despatch exam papers to examiners using the School's Courier service or by the Parcelforce service provided by the QCDA. The School Receptionist will assist with this process.

Invigilation

The Exams Officer will manage a team of external invigilators, and will nominate a Lead Invigilator for each large exam. The Head of Department will assist in invigilation to ensure good standards of discipline and to ensure that pupils will be personally known by an experienced member of staff.

Conduct of invigilators

- The Exams Officer will ensure that each exam session will have a designated Lead Invigilator, whose role will be to deploy invigilators and manage the invigilation team on duty. S/he will also ensure all the appropriate information, ICE booklets, notices, clocks etc are available and displayed as appropriate.
- The Exams Officer or the Lead Invigilator will ensure that all appropriate notices / instructions are made before the start of any exam. The will also be responsible for ensuring the close of exam processes and announcements, and for the orderly dismissal of candidates.
- The Exams Officer or Lead Invigilator will check attendance according to the seating plan.
- Invigilators must not take any work into the exam room but give full attention to the conduct of the examination.
- An annual training session will be held for all invigilators. Invigilators recruited since the last training session will be briefed in detail by the Exams Officer.
- Readers / scribes / prompters / practical assistants will be recruited and trained by the SENCO with the support of the Exams Officer.

Misconduct

This should be reported to the Exams Officer in the first instance, who will decide what action to take. If a candidate is reported to an exam board for misconduct they will be given the opportunity to write a statement. The invigilator(s) observing any misconduct will also provide a statement for submission to the exam board. Candidates must be advised of the possible sanctions and, if appropriate, be advised of any appeals process offered by the exam boards.

Absence from exams

A record will be taken of absent candidates at the start of an exam. School Office staff will contact the parents of absent students to ascertain reasons for absence or to give them the opportunity to quickly join the exam.

Results

- Results will be available for collection on the day notified by the exam boards only.
- Heads of Department should check for the possibility of a re-mark/re-grade within three days of scrutiny of the results.
- If a result is queried the Exams Officer will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark.

Access arrangements

It is the responsibility of the SENCO to liaise with the exam officer about the arrangements for candidates with special needs, who may require access arrangements to be put in place. The SENCO will ensure the Exams Officer has all information needed on each candidate with access arrangements.

The Exams Officer will ensure requests for special consideration will be sent to the boards and process the replies.

Staff in departments should inform the SENCO of special needs pupils who are embarking on a course leading to an examination. The SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements which individual pupils can be granted during the course and in the exam. In the case of pupils with specific learning difficulties/visual impairment or certain other medical conditions, these can be any or all of the following:

- Extra time for coursework and examinations
- Rest periods
- A reader
- A scribe
- Enlargements/models
- A helper
- A prompter
- Separate room/invigator
- Use of word processing

Special arrangements can also be made for pupils to take their examinations outside school e.g. phobic pupils, M.E. sufferers. In these cases invigilation/examination rules must still be adhered to.

The SENCO will apply to the exam boards at the beginning of a course, for any pupil needing access arrangements for coursework which carries marks towards a final mark and for the examinations themselves.

A separate room and invigilator will be provided for students needing access arrangements. The invigilator will ensure that all notices are displayed, ICE documents etc. are present, a clock is visible and announcements / instructions (eg the handing in of any mobile phones, water bottle labels) are made, in accordance with JCQ and exam board rules.

Readers/scribes should become familiar with candidates before their exams so, where possible, readers will work with the same student throughout their exams, beginning the relationship during mock exams. It is the duty of learning support to ensure that no unauthorised help is given to these candidates.

The early opening and checking of papers for candidates with access arrangements should be conducted in the presence of the Exams Officer and only with the permission of the exam board, at an agreed time. Any enlargements/modifications must be completed by the designated person in good time for the start of the exam. In cases where extra time has been granted and the examination finishes after school hours, the candidate's papers will be given to the Exams Officer and locked away.

The necessary re-scheduling of internal and external exams for special needs pupils will be co-ordinated with the Exams Officer e.g. pupils who have extra time that cannot fit two exams in one day.

Candidates with visual impairments may be granted an early start to examinations to allow time for rest breaks and extra time. Such candidates will be properly supervised at all times and have no contact with other candidates taking the same examination.

Candidates with extra help/time for coursework must ensure that it is all their own work. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department and learning support to ensure that all work is original.