



External Examinations Policy

The Axholme Academy

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EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS POLICY

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The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of external 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.

This external examination policy will be reviewed every three years by the Principal (Head of Centre), Vice Principal, Heads of Department, Exams Officer and the Governors.

1. Exam Responsibilities

HEAD OF CENTRE (Principal)

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the head of centre 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 exams and will provide a basic analysis of exam results:

- advises the senior leadership team, subject coordinators and subject teacher, relevant form tutors and other appropriate support staff on external exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for external exams in which candidates will be involved, and communicates regularly with staff concerning 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 controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms detailed data on entries
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ *Access arrangement, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration regulations and guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations*
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and outgoings relating to all exam costs/charges and liaises with Head of Centre and Business Manager.
- Organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- submits candidates' controlled assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned controlled assessments 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.

VICE PRINCIPAL

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4.

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL/CURRICULUM

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.

- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of Controlled Assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

HEAD OF CAREERS

- Guidance and careers information.

TEACHERS

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to heads of department/school/curriculum.

SENDCO

- Administration of access arrangements (with Exams Officer)
- 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 learners achieve their course aims.

LEAD INVIGILATOR/INVIGILATORS

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams officer, or member of the SLT, before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to Mrs Cuttell's office.
- Collection of all examination stationery and other issued materials and their return to Mrs Cuttell's office.

CANDIDATES

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

2. The Statutory Tests and Qualifications Offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre (Principal) Vice Principal, heads of curriculum, heads of subject, heads of department and the senior leadership team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, BTEC and ICT qualifications provided by the British Computer Society (ECDL).

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there is to be a change of syllabus or specification, the exams office must be informed by the end of the summer term at the latest and before the course starts the following September.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENDCO, subject teachers, head of key stage, heads of subject, Vice Principal and the Principal, SLT, Examinations Officer.

At Key Stage 4 all candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

3. Exam Seasons and Timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

External exams are scheduled in May/June.

3.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams.

4. Entries, entry details and late entries

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of subject, heads of department and the subject teachers.

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

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines may be circulated to heads of department by any or all of the following methods: email, notice board, staff bulletin.

Late entries are authorised by the exams officer and senior leadership team.

5. Exam Fees

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by departments.

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.

6. The Equality Act 2010, Special needs and Access Arrangements

6.1 DDA

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

6.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENDCO, doctor, pastoral teacher and educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

The SENDCO 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 SENDCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENDCO and the exams officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the exams officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENDCO with the exams officer. These candidates will normally take their examinations in the library.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENDCO with the exams officer.

7. Managing invigilators and exam days

7.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for all external exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

Securing the necessary Disclosure 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 office.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

7.2 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 lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Only people as in accordance with the JCQ booklet Instructions for Conducting Examinations are allowed in the examinations room.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be removed from the exam room before the end of a session.

Spare papers will be distributed to heads of department at the end of the exam.

8. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

8.1 Candidates

The centre's published rules on dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all 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 may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case an invigilator, or member of staff, must accompany them.

Examination Officer, SLT or administration staff are responsible for candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all.

8.2 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and if necessary, arranging overnight stays.

8.3 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 a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The exams officer will then complete an online special consideration form with the relevant awarding body within seven days of the final examination in the series.

9. Controlled Assessments and appeals against internal assessments

9.1 Controlled Assessments

Controlled Assessments should be completed by candidates as required by the course.

Heads of department will ensure all controlled assessments are ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers, heads of subject and the heads of department.

9.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office.

The main points are:

- appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- candidates may appeal if they feel their controlled assessment has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- appeals should be made in writing by the end of the first week in May to the examinations officer who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the examination officer's findings will be notified in writing to the candidate and recorded for awarding body inspection.

10. Results, Enquiries about Results (EARS) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

10.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae).

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre.

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

10.2 EARS

EARS may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will

investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

When the centre does not uphold 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.

10.3 ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

Centre 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.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

11. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person or collected and signed for. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Replacement certificates may be requested and paid for by the candidate direct to the examination board.

The centre retains certificates for one year.