

Skipton Girls' High School

Exams Policy

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Introduction

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.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre, the Exams Officer and the Board of 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 as an exams centre including:

- advising on appeals and re-marks.
- reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.
- analysis of exam results.

Exams officer¹:

- manages the administration of internal exams and external 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.

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

- administers access arrangements alongside the SENCO and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication *A guide to the special consideration process*.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Is responsible for the line management, 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, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.

Learning Directors are responsible for:

- information, advice and guidance 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.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Advice on appeals and re-marks.

Teachers are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the learning directors and exams officer.

The **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 (if required).
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

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 office 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 and signing 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.
- ensuring they bring the relevant equipment and any texts to each examination, in accordance with the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Deputy Head, Assistant Heads, Faculty Directors and Curriculum Leaders.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSE, ITQ, FSMQ, A levels, Baccalaureate and Extended Project.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the relevant Learning Director.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Learning Director in consultation with the SLT team.

Exam series

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June each year.

Internal trial exams and assessments are scheduled in December/January and are held under external exam conditions with invigilators.

University entrance exams are scheduled in November and STEP exams in June.

The centre does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the SLT team and the Exams Officer.

Exam timetables

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

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Curriculum Leaders.

The Centre accepts external entries from former students where this can be accommodated.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Learning Directors and Curriculum Leaders via email, briefings and the school bulletin.

Curriculum Leaders will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation of the Exams Officer and line manager and will be subject to additional charges by the exam board.

AS and A-Level re-sits are allowed subject to consultation with the teacher and Assistant Head.

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.

GCSE, AS and A-level entry exam fees are paid by the centre for the first entry.

Late entry or amendment fees may be charged to the subject faculty.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates:

- if they fail to sit an exam without mitigating circumstances
- 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.

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.

Access arrangements

The SENCo, fully supported by teaching staff and members of SLT, must lead on the access arrangements process within the Centre. 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 and implemented by the SENCo with support from the Student Progress team.

The SENCo will:-

- Ensure there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement
- Submit completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies

The Exams Officer will:-

- Arrange rooming for access arrangement candidates
- Organise invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations

Also refer to the Access Arrangements Policy, which is available on the school website/intranet.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Contingency plans are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations and if necessary will be communicated via email, briefings or other appropriate method.

Private candidates

Where it is possible to do so, and at the discretion of the Centre, previous students of Skipton Girls' High School are accepted as private candidates. Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Estimated grades

The Learning Directors and Curriculum Leaders are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested in adherence with any specified deadlines.

Managing invigilators

External/independent invigilators are used to invigilate examinations. These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.

Securing the necessary Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR Manager. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Academy Trust.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Malpractice

The Head of Centre is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

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 in accordance with the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements 2 weeks in advance.

The invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Senior Leadership Team staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with supervision and/or 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 heads of department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations.

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies.

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 and Assistant Head(s).

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour will apply at all times. The centre's Behaviour for Learning Policy will apply if students do not meet the requirements. Students will be sent home to change if they do not meet the acceptable dress rules before an examination.

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, the specification for that subject and the JCQ guidelines. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded 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, not including any extra time. Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Exams Officer in conjunction with Student Services is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

Clash candidates

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

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 immediately to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 5 days of the exam. Each examination affected must be supported by a separate special consideration claim.

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the exam.

Controlled Assessment

It is the duty of Curriculum Leaders to ensure that all controlled assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer with help from Reception 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 by the Curriculum Leaders. 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) document. This is available from the Exams Office and on the School website.

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 30 June to the Head of Centre who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements.
- The Head of Centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

Results

Candidates will receive an individual "Statement of Results" on results days,

- in person at the centre
- collected and signed for by a nominated person.

Arrangements for the Centre to be open on results days are made by the Exams Officer. 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. A request for a review of marking or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

A candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out, the cost of which is to be met by the candidate at the time of applying. If an EAR results in a grade increase, the candidate will be issued a refund by the Centre.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the centre will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

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

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of GCE results, candidates may ask subject staff to request a copy of a written exam script prior to a deadline set by the exam boards. If a result is queried, teaching staff will investigate the feasibility of requesting a re-mark.

Centre staff may also request original scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, 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 GCSE certificates at a presentation event, held in the Autumn term following the completion of Year 11 studies. Candidates will receive their GCE certificates at a Presentation Evening event, arranged in January following the completion of Year 13 studies.

Any candidates unable to attend these events can arrange to receive these certificates

- in person at the centre
- by post to their home address (recorded delivery), candidates to provide a self-addressed envelope and the relevant cost of postage
- 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.

The Centre retains certificates for a minimum of 12 months in accordance with examination board guidelines.

If a candidate loses a certificate then the candidate should contact the relevant exam board for a "Certifying Statement of Results". The cost of this will be met by the candidate.

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