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## 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.

This policy is available to view on the exams section of Firefly and the Centre's website.

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](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

## Exam responsibilities

**The Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre including:**

- completing the Annual Centre Registration form each year
- 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 Officer<sup>1</sup>:**

- circulates the JCQ documents to Learning Directors and Curriculum Leaders
- 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 NEAs are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries where required
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams

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

- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- 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 / Non-Examined Assessment marks are submitted to the appropriate awarding bodies by the deadlines, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies despatched 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 SLT, any post results service requests
- disposes securely of all exam documentation relating to an exam season after the deadline for appeals has passed

**Learning Directors/Curriculum Leaders** 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 / NEA mark sheets and declaration sheets
- providing NEA samples promptly for the Exams Officer to post for external moderation as requested by the exam boards
- 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
- processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the Exams Officer and teachers to ensure that the access arrangements required by candidates are provided for all assessments.

**Invigilators** are responsible for:

- attending regular invigilation training meetings
- assisting the Exams Officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- Supporting the centre's policies, in particular those regarding Safeguarding and GDPR. (See Policy documents on the Skipton Girls' High School website)

**Candidates** are responsible for:

- confirmation and signing of entries. Late amendments, including to personal details after the entry deadline will incur a charge which will be passed on to the candidates
- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own
- ensuring they have read and agreed to comply with all the relevant JCQ candidate documents governing written exams, NEAs and online tests.
- completing and handing in NEAs and externally marked assessments by the internally-set deadlines
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations
- ensuring they bring the relevant equipment required 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, Learning Directors and Curriculum Leaders.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSE, A levels and Extended Project and any other deemed relevant by the SLT.

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. This should be done before the teaching of a specification begins.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject or tier 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. There is a National Contingency date for examinations which is published on the website every year. All students are expected to be available for exams up to and including this date.

Internal trial exams and assessments are scheduled throughout the year. University entrance exams are scheduled in October 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, unless it is for a subject not offered by the centre, in which case the candidate is required to pay.

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
- late amendments requested without the agreement of the Centre
- 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.

For external/private candidates, exams fees will be payable by the candidate. Reasonable administration fees and invigilation costs may be payable by the external candidate if the school will incur additional costs over and above those examinations already scheduled.

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 and the Word Processor (Exam) Policy, which is available on the school website.

## **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.

Please refer to the Exams Contingency Plan, which is available on the school website.

## 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.

## Managing invigilators

External invigilators are used to invigilate examinations. These invigilators will be used for external exams and may be involved with internal exams where required.

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. There is one annual update training session prior to the main Summer exam season. New invigilators are trained using the Exams Office invigilator training modules.

## Malpractice

The Head of Centre is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice and shall be done so in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

## 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 a minimum of 2 weeks in advance.

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

Any staff present in the exam room 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.

ICT are responsible for setting up any IT facilities required for an exam a minimum of 30 minutes before the examination start time.

## Identification of candidates

Candidate cards, with photographs, names and exam numbers are placed on each exam desk, in accordance with the exam room seating plan. This ensures all candidates can be correctly identified in the exam room. In addition, it is a centre requirement that Key stage 4 candidates wear the centre's school uniform to all exams. Key stage 5 candidates should dress according to the school dress code and wear their lanyards. Senior Leadership Team staff may be present outside the main exam rooms at the start of the exam to assist with supervision and the identification of candidates. If an invigilator is unsure as to the identity of any candidate, they must contact the Exams Officer immediately for assistance.

Private candidates not known to the centre will be asked to bring photographic proof of ID to the exam room before they can be admitted.

## 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 applies to all mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities including watches of all types. 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 managing overnight supervision agreements 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 the required timeframe.

Special consideration does not apply to pre-existing medical conditions unless there is a flare up on the day of the examination. All special consideration requests will be managed in accordance with *JCQ's Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments regulations and guidance*.

## NEA/Coursework

It is the duty of Curriculum Leaders to ensure that all NEAs 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 Data and Exams team will notify all candidates of their provisional marks following centre moderation on the agreed date. The Exams Officer will also inform staff and candidates 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, on Firefly 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 using the Internal Appeals form in accordance with the Internal Appeals Procedure.
- The Head of Centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

## Receipt and Dispatch of examination materials

All secure exam materials delivered to the centre are signed for and logged at reception and the Exams Officer notified immediately. Facilities may be required to assist with moving the confidential materials to the secure room, where they are then checked by the Exams Officer against centre entry/exam timetable information. Any discrepancies or concerns must be reported to the awarding body immediately. All confidential materials are then locked away in the centre's secure storage facility and a log detailing all receipts is kept.

All exam question paper packets remain sealed and in the secure storage facility until the timetabled exam day, date and session. The Exams Officer and a second member of the data and exams team check the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier of entry before a question paper packet is opened and have to complete documentation to confirm. If one or more clash candidates have an exam rescheduled from the afternoon to the morning session, the identified exam question paper packet(s) is opened to get out the required number of papers and then immediately resealed and returned to secure storage.

Following each exam all scripts are sorted and packaged in the secure room and remain securely stored until they are dispatched with the Parcelforce courier. A signed dispatch log is kept for each session of the exam season until the exam results day has passed.

## Conflict of Interest

To comply with the regulations, the centre is required to manage Conflicts of Interest and inform the relevant awarding body/bodies for any of their qualifications if:  
any members of centre staff who are taking qualifications at their own centre which include internally assessed components/units;

- any members of centre staff who are teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally assessed components/units; and

maintains clear records of all instances where:

- exams office staff have members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments either at the centre itself or other centres;
- centre staff are taking qualifications at their centre which do not include internally assessed components/units;
- centre staff are taking qualifications at other centres.

The Head of Centre is responsible for managing the conflicts of interest process. This process is delegated to the Exams Officer.

## 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
- by post (posted out on results day) if the centre has been provided in advance with a large letter sae

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 priority 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 review of marking.

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.

## **Addendum due to Covid-19: September 2020**

The centre will follow current public health guidance in regard to the administration and contingency planning for examinations. The emergency evacuation plan and examination contingency plan have been reviewed and additional addendums added to reflect current guidance on safety. In particular the school gives due regard and will follow the advice set out in the "Public Health Guidance to support Autumn exams" in addition to all JCQ and awarding body guidance.

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