

## Exams Policy

### Rationale

Public examinations are the main tool for measuring the success of a school and its students both in qualitative and value-added terms. In addition, other internally set and marked examinations take place at other stages in a student's progress through the school in order to both prepare for public examinations and check student learning.

We have a moral duty to ensure students do as well as they can in exams to ensure they can progress to the next stage of education or employment.

### At key stage 4

- All students should be entered for appropriate qualifications.
- All students will be monitored carefully throughout their time at the school, concerns notified to the Head as soon as they arise.
- If Students fail to attend an examination and do not produce medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances. This will be communicated in writing to students and parents/carers at the start of GCSE.

### Internal Examination Appeals Procedures

The school is committed to ensuring that whenever their staffs assesses students' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments should be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. Students' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the examination board. Where a set of work is divided between staff, consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation. If students believe that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this appeals procedure. **Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade.**

The existence of this procedure is made known to students by reference in a letter and at the start of examinations courses and in this examinations policy, which is available for inspection on request.

1. Appeals should be made as soon as possible, and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examinations series.
2. Appeals should be made in writing to the examinations officer who will investigate the appeal. If the examinations officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, he/she will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise, if the examination officer is not able to conduct the investigation for any other reason.
3. The person conducting the investigation will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed with the requirements of the awarding body and examination code of practice of the QCA. This will be done before the end of the series.
4. The result of the appeal will be made known in writing to the parties concerned, together with any correspondence with the awarding body, any changes made to the assessment of the piece of work in question and any changes made for the future.

5. A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. **Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of the school and is not covered by these procedures.** Details of the appeals procedure for the relevant awarding body are available from the examination assistant.

### **GCSE**

- When results are published examination staff will distribute results, be available to give guidance to students and prepare data for publication and monitoring purposes.
- This service will be supported by the Exams Assistant.

### **Accountability of departments**

1. One person should be nominated from each department to take responsibility for exam entries/withdrawals etc.
2. Exam withdrawals need to be approved by the Head who will advise the Exams Assistant.

### **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 Exam Assistant. If it is agreed that a student will not be entered or will be withdrawn it is the responsibility of the Head to inform parents in writing of the decision. If the student is withdrawn

### **External exams**

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

1. Final confirmation of entry numbers and levels will be made with the department.
2. All exam papers will be counted in by the Head and Exam Assistant and locked away under secure conditions.
3. All sealed exam papers will be checked by the Exam Assistant and or the Head.
4. No exam papers can be removed from the exam room before the end of a session.
5. All exams will be conducted according to the rules laid down by exam boards and within the start and finish times determined by the board.
6. Any misconduct or irregularity must be reported to the Head immediately, who will inform the exam board concerned.
7. At the end of any exam, papers will be collected and taken to the office and given into the care of the exam assistant.
8. Students will not be allowed to leave an exam unless their exam paper has been picked up and secured by an invigilator.

### **Coursework**

It is the responsibility of each department to ensure all coursework is despatched at the correct time. Coursework will be despatched using the same method as for exam papers. Copies will be taken of audio or video coursework and kept in school. The department must have a copy of the marks awarded in case coursework goes missing in the post. All coursework must be securely kept and not returned to students for 1 year unless regulations allow work to be returned.

## **Misconduct/Maladministration/Malpractice**

Where there are suspected cases, all incidents or suspicions should be reported immediately to the Head of Centre to ensure the integrity of the qualification is not threatened. It is important to note that these occurrences or suspicions require the same reporting whether it is staff, student or another person. All incidents must be reported to the JCQ using form M2a which can be found on their website.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

It may from time to time be the situation where qualifications are withdrawn either by the centre of the exam board. This may be due to changes with the exam specification, where the 'life' of the exam is nearing its end or where the continuation of the qualification is no longer viable to the centre or candidate. Candidates may also withdraw themselves from qualifications and in these incidents the centre may make charges where there is a financial cost to the centre.

## **Invigilation**

Conduct of invigilators

1. The Exams Assistant will ensure that each exam session will have a designated invigilator in charge, whose role will be to deploy invigilators and oversee conduct of each.
2. Senior invigilator of SIE will check attendance according to seating plan.
3. Invigilators must not take any work into the exam room but give full attention to the conduct of the examination.

## **Results**

1. Results will be available for collection on the day notified by the exam boards only.
2. Subjects should check for the possibility of a re-mark/re-grade by 2nd September and provide the Exams Assistant with the details. All re-mark requests must be approved by the Head unless the student is paying for it.
3. If a result is queried the Exams Assistant will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark.
4. Results will not be given to students or parents over the phone, emailed or faxed.

## **Special needs**

It is the responsibility of the SENCO to liaise with the Exams Assistant about the arrangements for candidates with Special Needs and will provide the necessary supporting evidence before deadlines for access arrangement applications. The Exams Assistant will ensure requests for special consideration will be sent to the boards and process the replies. The SENCO will liaise with parents on the provisions granted by the exam boards for their child.

## **Special needs exam policy**

Staff in departments should inform the SENCO of special needs pupils who are embarking on a course leading to an examination, and the date of that exam. 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/printing facility

In these cases invigilation/examination rules must still be adhered to.

SENCO will inform the exam Assistant, who will communicate with the exam boards at the beginning of a course, if any pupil is to be given special arrangements for coursework which carries marks towards a final mark.

A separate room and invigilator are required for anyone/group with a reader and a separate room is required for an individual or group who is has use of a word processor or scribe.

It is the duty of the Head to ensure that no unauthorised help is given to these pupils.

The SENCO, in consultation with the exam assistant will complete the special arrangement request forms for special needs candidates at the appropriate time and provide the necessary evidence to reach the exam boards on the stipulated dates. Boards have a timetable of dates for the ordering of modified/-enlarged papers for NCTs and GCSEs which must be complied with.

The early opening and checking of special needs candidates' papers should be conducted in the presence of the exam assistant only with the permission of the exam board, at an agreed time and any further enlargements/modifications 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 candidates' papers will be given to the exam officer and locked away.

The necessary re-scheduling of internal and external exams for special needs pupils will be co-ordinated with the exam officer e.g. pupils who have extra time 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 examinations.

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

## **External exams**

### **Appeals**

Decision about appeals for external exams need to be based upon:

- evidence that a student's result is significantly below expectations.
- students who are close to grade boundaries and a change would significantly benefit the school or departmental results.
- evidence that the overall results do not match the teacher assessment and there is a concern that the quality of marking was not adequate.
- concern that results between the two centres at AS/A level are significantly different as there were different markers.
- evidence that coursework has been significantly changed and the moderators report does not explain this.

Papers should be recalled when there is a concern that the department are not fully aware of why there has been underachievement for certain ability ranges or on certain papers.

Decisions to get re-marks or to appeal results needs to be approved by the Head responsible for exams ONLY.

**Please refer to the QCQ handbook- Instructions for conducting examinations. A copy can be found in each room where examinations are to be held as well as in the Head's office.**

**Please note that details of academic performance during the preceding year, including the results of public examinations may be obtained through the school office.**