

## **Examination policy**

### **Preamble**

Public examinations provide vital summative assessment, generally at the end of a key stage. This assessment gives information to students, parents, other educational institutions, local authority and government agencies and employers about knowledge, understanding and skills achieved. To this end the school participates willingly in the administration of these examinations in the best interests of the students and the school, and if the conditions set out below in this policy are met in full, the school will meet the cost for entry and all delegated administrative matters leading to final certification.

In addition to external examinations other, internally set and marked examinations may take place at other stages in a student's progress through school, in order to both prepare for public examinations and to check student learning.

### **Policy**

The procedures set out below ensure that:

- The exam system in school combines entitlement with flexibility.
- Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate the highest achievement of which they are capable and competent.
- Students undertake examinations knowing what is expected of them in terms of preparation and behaviour.
- Students and parents are guided and informed about decisions on levels of entry or withdrawal from exams. These decisions are taken with pupils and parents fully understanding the implications for careers or future education.
- 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.
- Accurate examination data is available to inform target setting.

### **External examinations**

For the examination system to run efficiently key people must take on responsibility for various tasks:

- The Head teacher has overall responsibility for the school as an examination centre.
- The Deputy Head teacher is responsible for organising teaching and learning and therefore the opportunities for external validation of courses followed at key stage 4 and post 16.
- The Senior Management link is responsible for overseeing the work of the Examinations Officer and providing support whenever necessary. If the Exam Officer is absent the Senior Management Link will take over the day-to-day running of the exams.

- The Exams Officer is responsible for administration of entries, relevant paperwork, organisation of examination sessions and examination data (see Job Description for full details).
- Heads of Department should offer guidance and advice to students who are unsure about examination entries and are responsible, in consultation with class teachers, for entering pupils for the correct papers or combination of papers, based upon historical evidence of performance. The pupil's performance in assessments devised by the department will determine the level of entry, or in a very few cases, non-entry for exams. The case for non-entry must be evidence based over the duration of the course.  
Entries must be made by the relevant dates to avoid the school incurring unnecessary charges.
- Administrative staff will offer support for the input of data, communication with the examination boards, posting of examination papers and the post results procedures.
- Classroom teachers are responsible for supplying accurate information to Heads of Department as to the appropriate levels of entry for exams.
- Invigilators are responsible for the smooth running of the exam sessions and report directly to the Exam Officer.
- The SENCO is responsible for liaising with the Exam Officer about arrangements for candidates with Special Needs.

## **Procedures**

### **Entries**

All candidates will be entered by the due date set by the various exam boards. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that the correct information is issued to the Exam Officer. Withdrawals or alterations will be accepted by the Exams Officer up to a set date. Any late withdrawals/alterations/entries except in exceptional circumstances will be charged to the department.

If, once entered for an examination, a pupil fails to complete any component of the examination, or fails to present himself/herself for the examination, then the parents/guardian will be expected to pay the entry fee for the subject(s). Governors approved this charging policy in 1989. Medical evidence must be provided if requested by the school/exam board.

If a candidate wishes to enter for a specific tier of the examination against the advice of their teacher or the Head of Department then the candidate will be expected to pay the examination fee. If on results day the candidate is found to have been successful at this tier then the school will refund the entry fee.

### **Year 12 and 13**

The Policy agreed in school states:

- A limited number of examinations will be taken in the January of Year 12, where this is felt to be beneficial to the pupils. This will be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure that it does not have a detrimental effect on other subjects being studied.
- The majority of AS examinations for Year 12 to be sat in the June session.

- THREE modules (AS re-sits or first time examinations in A2) can be sat by Year 13 pupils in January.
- Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with the student, subject teacher/Head of Department and exam officer.
- All other A2 modules to be sat in June in Year 13.

### Fees

When a pupil is sitting an external examination for the first time, no charges are applicable, except, when the pupil without good reason fails to attend or meet the requirements of the examination (e.g. Fails to submit coursework).

Pupils/students are able to re-sit modules in order to improve their grades but it should be noted that unless the course/year is being repeated as a whole then the pupils and their parents are responsible for paying the exam entry fee which covers exam board charges for re-sits. A candidate will not be entered for a re-sit exam unless the school has received the entry fee.

### External exams

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

1. Final confirmation of entry numbers and levels will be made with the Head of Department.
2. All exam papers will be counted in by the Exam Officer and locked securely away.
3. No exam papers can be removed from the exam room before the end of a session.
4. All exams will be conducted according to the rules laid down by the exam boards and within the start and finish times determined by the board.
5. Any misconduct or irregularity must be reported to the Exam Officer as soon as possible, who will then inform the exam board concerned.
6. In the absence of the Exam Officer or Senior Management Link at the end of any exam, papers will be collected and taken to the office for safe storage.
7. Students will not be allowed to leave an exam unless their paper has been picked up and secured by an invigilator.
8. After the release of results, Heads of Department may request the return of papers or a re-mark at the school's expense. If a student requests this service he/she will be charged personally.

### Non-entry

It is assumed that all departments monitor the progress of their pupils and that remedial action will have taken place before the following steps would be deemed necessary:

- If there is any danger that a pupil may not achieve the standard justifying entry, a letter **MUST** be sent home as soon as possible. Only the Head of Year can send this letter after consultation with the Head of Department. Copies of this letter must be kept by the Head of Year in the pupil's file. A further copy should be forwarded to the Exam Officer.
- If it is felt necessary to withdraw a pupil from an exam the same procedure must be followed as for non-entry.
- Staff are advised that it is very difficult to justify the non-entry/withdrawal of a pupil if reports do not provide sufficient evidence of unsatisfactory progress.
- Staff should also be aware that the school's policy is to encourage pupil entry for examinations even this has an adverse effect on overall pass rates.
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### Coursework

It is the responsibility of each department to ensure all coursework is despatched at the correct time. The Head of Department may liaise with the Exam Officer if necessary. Coursework will be despatched using the same method as for exam papers.

### Invigilation

The Exam officer will ensure that each exam session has an appropriate number of invigilators who are fully aware of their responsibilities and duties. Invigilators must not take any work into the exam venue but give full attention to the conduct of the examination.

### Results

When results are published appropriate staff will distribute results, be available to give guidance to students and prepare data for publication and monitoring purposes. Members of the administrative staff will support this service.

The day prior to results being issued to candidates **designated staff only** will have access to the results electronically.

### Special Needs

The SENCO must ensure that the Exam Officer has all information needed on each candidate with special needs. The Exam Officer will ensure requests for special consideration are sent to the various boards and process the replies. In the case of pupils with specific learning difficulties arrangements can be made as follows:

- Extra time in examinations
- Rest periods
- A reader
- A scribe
- Enlargements
- Separate room/invigilator
- Use of word processing/printing facility
- Use of coloured overlays

Special arrangements can also be made for pupils to take their examinations outside school e.g. phobic pupils, seriously ill or hospitalised pupils. In these cases invigilation/examination rules must be adhered to.

### Internal examinations

The exact nature of summative assessment in each subject will be determined ultimately by the Head of Department within the rationale and purposes of this policy and other related policies. The Exam Officer will co-ordinate the end of year written examinations in KS3 and Year 10 to ensure an even distribution of testing across the allotted time span.

Heads of Department are responsible for setting papers of an appropriate level and ensuring papers are copied and with the Exam Officer by the specified time.

All staff must ensure they read fully the guidelines issued to them prior to the exam period and must carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.