



## **POLICY STATEMENT EXAMINATIONS**

### **AIM**

The aim of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of 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.

### **POLICY**

Public examinations provide vital summative assessment, generally at the end of a year or period of study. 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 Academy, and if the conditions set out below in this policy are met in full, the Academy 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.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

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 students 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.

### **MONITORING**

This policy will be monitored by the Vice Principal, Heads of Department and the Exams Officer.

### **REVIEW**

The exam policy will be reviewed annually by the Vice Principal, and the Curriculum Committee.

**Confirmed by: The Governing Body of Wymondham High Academy Trust**

Signature of Chair ..... Dated.....

**Learning Teaching & Curriculum Committee**

## EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES

### The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre and advises on appeals and re-marks;
- is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice – refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

### The Exams Officer:

- manages the administration of public and internal exams;
- advises the Senior Leadership Team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies;
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors 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 exam timetable that will affect them;
- consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework and controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines;
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries;
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts;
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications *Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration*;
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes;
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges;
- line manages the exam invigilators, organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams;
- submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework 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.

### Heads of Department are responsible for:

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries;
- involvement in post-results procedures;
- accurate completion of coursework and 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.

### Teachers are responsible for:

- notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course);
- submission of candidates' names to Heads of Department and support in identification of tier of entry.

### The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements;
- the provision of additional support – with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment – to help candidates achieve their course aims.

### Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- carrying out the day-to-day running of the exam;
- 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 their return to the exams office.

#### **Candidates are responsible for:**

- confirmation and signing of entries;
- understanding coursework and controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED**

- The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Governors and SLT;
- The qualifications offered are GCE, (AS & A2), functional skills, BTECs and GCSE;
- The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Academy's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by the end of May each year;
- Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the heads of department;
- Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, HoH, RAC, SENCO, subject teachers and head of subject.

#### **EXAM SERIES**

- Internal and external exams are scheduled throughout the year but the major exam periods run in November, January and May to June.
- The SLT and Head of Department decide which exam series are used in the Academy;
- On-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed by the SLT.

#### **TIMETABLE**

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetable for internal exams and external exams.

#### **ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS AND LATE ENTRIES**

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by subject teachers;
- Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal but may then be asked to bear the cost of any action not agreed by the Academy;
- The centre accepts entries from external candidates at the Academy's discretion;
- The centre does act as an exam centre for other organisations;
- Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email, meetings, and the VLE;
- Late entries are authorised by Head of Centre and Heads Department;
- GCSE re-sits will meet the GCSE terminal rule and re-sit requirements;
- Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with candidates, subject teachers, and Heads of Department.

#### **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;
- GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre;
- Exam fees are paid by the centre;
- GCSE exam fees for exams outside of the Academy's curriculum delivery will not be paid for unless they are in the student's first language or main spoken language. Additional costs for travel to alternative venues etc. will not be covered and it will be down to the parent/carer to contact the alternative centre and make all the necessary arrangements.
- Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments, centre and candidates depending on the situation;

- Fee reimbursements are not sought from candidates who fail without good reason to complete the requirements of a public exam where the governing body or local authority originally paid/agreed to pay the fee;
- Re-sit fees are paid by the Academy when it is felt appropriate for that student to do so. If the Academy does not agree a re-sit is appropriate but the parent or student wishes a re-sit to be provided they will be liable for the fee.

### **DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT**

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the disability provisions under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006.

The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education. A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The centre will meet the requirements of the DDA by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, Heads of Department, Exams Officer and SENCo.

### **ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS**

- The SENCo 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 SENCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam;
- A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo, doctor, pastoral teacher and/or educational psychologist/specialist teacher;
- Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams/controlled assessments is the responsibility of both the SENCo and 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 SENCo with the Exams Officer;
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCo with the Exams Officer.

### **OVERSEAS STUDENTS**

Managing exams for overseas students is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

### **CONTINGENCY PLANNING**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

### **ESTIMATED GRADES**

Heads of Department and subject teachers are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams office when requested by the Exams Officer.

### **MANAGING INVIGILATORS**

- Support staff, external staff and agency employees are used to invigilate examinations;
- These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams;
- Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office and centre administration;
- Securing the necessary clearance through the Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) (previously Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)) for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Personnel Officer;
- DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the Academy;
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer;
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the SLT.

## **MALPRACTICE**

The Vice Principal 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 to collect from the Exams Officer;
- Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms;
- The lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines;
- Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam prior to the giving out of exam papers to assist with identification of candidates and the settling of students;
- In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties;
- 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 24 hours after the end of the exam session.

## **CANDIDATES**

- The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other 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 are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Exams Officer or senior invigilator;
- Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times;
- The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day;
- For clash candidates, the supervision of escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Exams Officer;
- 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, by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor;
- The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

## **INTERNAL ASSESSMENT**

Internal assessment replaces the largely discontinued term coursework.

It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

## **FULLY INTERNAL ASSESSED QUALIFICATIONS**

Some qualifications are assessed internally as a result of trained staff being available to do so (e.g. BTECs and AIDA qualifications). In all cases the centre will follow the guidelines laid down by individual awarding bodies. The centre will also ensure staff training is up to date and internal verification processes support accurate assessment.

## **MARKS AND APPEALS**

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers and Heads of Department.

Appeals against internal assessments must be made by the final deadlines set by each exam board for submission of marks. Please contact the Exams Officer for more information if required.

## **APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS**

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy, available from the exams office.

## **RESULTS, ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS (EARS) AND ACCESS TO SCRIPTS (ATS)**

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days in person at the Academy.

Arrangements for the Academy to be open on results days are made by the Vice Principal. The organisation of staff on results days is the responsibility of the SLT through the Exams Officer.

### **EARS**

EARS may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested. 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. This expense will in the main be borne by the Exams Office, except where large scale re-marking is requested by departments without evident of the need for it. In this case individual departments may have to meet the cost. The re-mark of any candidates within one mark of a grade boundary will be paid by the Exams Office.

When the centre does not support a candidate or parent's request for 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.

### **ATS**

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

## **CERTIFICATES**

Certificates are presented in person, posted (recorded delivery), posted (first class) and collected and signed for. Certificates cannot be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, unless they have been authorised to do so.

The centre retains certificates for three years.