

# Examinations 2021/2022 Policy

**Responsibility for Review: SLT**

**Date of Last Review: September 2021**



# Statement of intent

The purpose 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.

This exam policy will be reviewed annually.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the head of centre, senior leadership team, heads of curriculum, directors of learning, exams manager and the governors.

Signed by :.....

Date:.....

(Principal)

Signed by :.....

Date:.....

(Chair of Governors)

## Exam Responsibilities

### Head of centre / Principal

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

### Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- 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 exam boards
- 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
- Ensure students sign a copy of their timetable
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assignments 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. Storage is in line with JCQ regulations.
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manages the senior exams invigilator in 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.

### Vice Principal

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4 / Post-16.

### Directors of Learning / Head of Subject

- 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 mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Checking coursework forms are fully complete with a mark for each candidate.
- Checking the coursework sample against the list of students requested
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- Providing the exams manager with the correct examination board, specification/syllabus code, cash-in code, unit codes and tiers of entry

### Careers Advisor

- Guidance and careers information.

## Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to Directors of Learning / faculty.
- Pass on details of conversations with students to Directors of learning/subject leaders regarding entries or amendments.
- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4 / Post-16.

## DPA's / Year Manager

- Distribution of booklets outlining the regulations for the conduct of examinations
- Ensuring students are aware of how the regulations affect them.

## SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements.
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- 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.

## Exam invigilators

- Arrange name cards according to the seating plan
- 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.
- Completing official attendance registers and packing of examination papers

## Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework and controlled assignment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework or controlled assignment as their own.
- Liaising with exams manager and staff regarding any changes once the timetable has been signed.

## Support staff

- Support for the input of data.
- Collating seating cards for examination sessions
- Support in the distribution and collection of timetables and exam related materials between students and learning families and the exams office.

## The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre, heads of curriculum, heads of subject, Directors of Learning, heads of sixth form and the senior leadership team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, A levels and BTEC, CeFS, DipFS, OCR Nationals, OCR Cambridge Nationals, OCR Cambridge TEC's, NCFE level 2 qualifications and Rock School.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed within two weeks of the start of the new academic year.

## At key stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

## At post-16

It is now expected that the A-level qualifications will be completed and cashed-in at the end of year 13. Students following BTEC courses post 16 will cash in for AS equivalent if they decide not to continue with the subject in Y13.

## Exams Seasons and timetables

### Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in November, January and March

External exams are scheduled in November, January, March and May/June.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

### Timetables

The exams manager will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

Candidates must sign their statement of entry timetable. In doing so they will be confirming that they agree with the entries made and will be expected to attend all written papers, controlled assignments and submit appropriate coursework. Candidates who have not signed their statement of entry timetable will have their entries withdrawn.

Students must also sign a sheet to confirm receipt of their exam (seating) timetable. Any timetables returned or missing a signature from the signing sheet will be posted home to the address we hold on our school system.

## Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

### Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of subject, Directors of Learning and the subject teachers.

The presumption will be that all students taking a course leading to a recognised qualification will be entered for the qualification. The timing of entries/sittings for unit components will be a decision for the department, but must allow students to claim an award at the end of the course.

Directors of Progress and Achievement (DPA) or Year Manager's (YM) may recommend a non-entry where there are clear academic, pastoral or attendance reasons for so doing. (e.g. Attendance at school below 80% may be a reason for non-entry).

Departments may recommend a non-entry where the student is not expected to achieve a grade. This may be because:

- Attendance falls below 80% in the subject in the autumn term of Year 11.
- Coursework or controlled assignments have not been (and cannot be) done. In this case it is expected that the student's parents or carers will have been contacted and opportunities provided for the student to catch up.
- A students' progress has been limited by other factors: academic or social. In the former case, an alternative qualification e.g. Certificate of Achievement should be offered if available. In the latter case, clear reasons must be given.

Each non-entry will be considered by the Deputy Principal: Curriculum, who will make the final decision on entries.

At the time of entry for final award in February a list will be completed by DoL explaining each recommended non-entry. The Academy will inform parents in each case of non-entry.

The examinations manager will request entries well in advance of the awarding body deadlines for each series. They will be entered on SIMS and sent back to departments for checking and signing.

The examinations manager will only accept entries from the Director of Learning and not from students. If a director of learning wishes to delegate entries for some subjects to subject leaders then this must be put in writing to the exams manager at the start of the year.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal in consultation with the school. However the final decision for entries rests with the school. The examinations manager will not accept any amendments from students. These must be in writing from Directors of Learning or Subject leaders where this has been delegated.

## Withdrawals/Amendments

Withdrawals/Amendments can be made at any time before the final withdrawal date

Withdrawals/Amendments should be made by the DoL in writing to the exams office. You should receive confirmation within a week that the withdrawal/amendment has been made. If you do not receive confirmation after a week, please check with the Exams Office.

Amendments only require extra expenditure when they are made after the amendment deadline dates.

## Students in school following courses elsewhere

Students following courses at colleges or centres in their own time can be entered for the external examination through the school at the centres discretion and only if it is a subject not offered in school. It is the candidates/parents responsibility to inform the exams manager of their intention to enter for this subject by 21st September if the candidate intends to sit examinations in that academic year. This ensures that both candidate and centre receive appropriate documentation. Students must show evidence that they are attending a taught course that will lead to this qualification.

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

## Late Entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to directors of learning via email, noticeboard and staff trays.

Late entries are authorised by exams manager and line manager for exams. Where late entries involve a cost to the department these will need authorising by the Director of Learning. Late entry costs will be passed to the department.

## Retakes

Candidates are allowed 1 retake per subject/module in GCSE.

Candidates are allowed 1 retake per subject/module in AS.

Candidates are allowed 1 retake per subject/module in A2.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, exams officer, Directors of Learning and the heads of subject.

## Exam Fees

GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

AS initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments unless it is due to an exams office error in which case it will be paid for by the exams office.

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.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements or who are disqualified from an examination due to malpractice.

This fees policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.

## GCSE : Y11

The centre will pay for one resit in modules leading to a GCSE qualification for any candidate who have not met their target grade.

If a candidate chooses to resit when:

- a. they have already met their target grade or
- b. it is against the advice of their teacher,

then the candidate will need to pay the cost.

## GCE retakes Y12/13

The centre will pay for 1 GCSE resit ONLY if the candidate is in full attendance on the course in school for the full academic year and submits the appropriate coursework.

## GCE Examinations

Candidates are allowed to resit each module once and this must be paid for by the candidate.

## Absence

Any candidate who is absent from an examination, controlled assignment or who fails to submit coursework will be billed for the cost of the qualification.

## Disqualification

If a candidate is disqualified from an examination then they will be billed for the full cost of the qualification.

## Post 16 Students

If a post 16 student has persistent non-attendance or fails to meet deadlines and they are following a BTEC, ifs or OCR National Course they will be asked to pay a deposit of £50 towards the cost of the course. This is refunded in full on completion of the full course. For a student following AS and A2 examinations, they will be asked to pay the entry costs for their examinations. This is fully refundable if the UMS scores show that the student has prepared fully for the examination. All these decisions will be at the discretion of the Assistant Principal for KS5.

## Enquiries about results

Departments will need to pay for the costs of enquiries about results. If these enquiries find in the centre or candidates favour then the cost is reimbursed by the awarding body.

Access to photocopied scripts at level 3 can potentially save a lot of money on a remark.

EAR for the January & March series are submitted in March & April when budgets are often running low so money needs to be allocated.

If a candidate requests a remark and this is against the advice of the centre staff, then the candidate will need to pay the full cost of the service prior to the request being sent.

## The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Equality Act 2010, Special Needs and Access Arrangements

### DDA 2005 & Equality Act 2010

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law. The Equality Act 2010 strengthens the duty to make reasonable adjustments, defines substantial disadvantage and places new duties on the qualification register. Refer to JCQ document Regulation and Guidance Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration p5-14. This covers both general and vocational qualifications.

### Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the Head of Inclusion and the educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

The Head of Inclusion 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 Head of Inclusion/Examinations Manager can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

### Access Arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Head of Inclusion and the exams manager.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the exams manager.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams manager.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the exams manager in consultation with the Head of Inclusion.

Access arrangements extend to controlled assignments.

## Quality Assurance Procedure

- The Centre is committed to Quality Assurance and believes it is an integral part of the Centre's processes.
- The focus of the Centre is on candidates with the provision of relevant and flexible quality training programmes and assessment to suit their needs and lifestyles.
- The provision is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team
- An Internal Verification process is in place to ensure that consistent testing and assessment standards are maintained by cross-marking.
- Internal Verification is carried out on an on-going basis.
- All cases of borderline achievement are Internally Verified.
- At least 10% of other assessments are checked across all markers and modules.
- Where a new marker is assessing, all work is double marked until the Centre Manager is satisfied with the standard.
- All new invigilators are observed conducting at least one assessment to ensure that regulations are followed.
- Existing invigilators should be observed conducting an assessment at least once a year.
- Internal Verification is recorded on candidate work and records and on central recording systems.
- Information from the awarding body is disseminated to all members of staff involved in assessing.
- The organisation's policy for Equal Opportunities is followed and monitored.

## Managing invigilators and exam days

### Managing Invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision.

They will be used for all exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

CRB fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators have an annual training session at the start of the academic year and an annual review session at the end of the academic year.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration and exams office.

### 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.

Estates are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and seating plans will be provided at least a week in advance.

At Dixons Allerton Academy, morning examinations start at 9am and afternoon examinations start at 1:30pm. The doors of the examination rooms will be opened 15 minutes before the start of each examination for candidates to enter.

### *Examinations involving a whole year group.*

Directors of Learning and SLT (who are not teaching) to help manage an orderly movement to examination seats and an orderly exit once the examination has ended.

### *Morning and afternoon examinations involving smaller groups*

For examinations involving smaller groups of students, support will only be requested from SLT, Directors of Learning DPA and YM at the start and the end if required. This will be dependent on the number and nature of the students involved.

### *During the examination*

The lead invigilator or examinations manager will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

DPA, YM & SLT may be present as students enter the examination room to assist with Identification of candidates. Teaching staff or SLT that teach the examined subject will not be allowed to enter the examination room. In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

All candidates are required to remain for the full allocated time of the examination. No candidate can leave early. (see SLT supervised room)

Exam papers must not be removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Directors of Learning/faculty 24 hours after the exam session.

### *SLT Supervised Room*

Students who are educated off site, part time students and any other student who has difficulty coping in the main examination hall will complete their exams in the separate room with SLT supervision. An invigilator will be provided in addition to the SLT member of staff. This member of staff can complete their own work during the exam. These students, at the discretion of the SLT member, can leave early to be escorted off site if necessary. However they must be supervised either in the examination or in a separate room with SLT (no access to mobile phones) until one hour after the scheduled start time of the examination. This is 10am for morning examinations and 2.30pm for afternoon examination.

## Exams and Fire Evacuation

There is a fire evacuation policy that is to be read out in the Sports hall, Dance Studio and any classrooms or offices at the start of each examination (see appendix 1)

## Exams and Snow

There is a policy for how the examinations will run in the event of heavy snow (see appendix 2)

## Candidates, clash candidates, malpractice and special consideration

### Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all 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 may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case an Invigilator must accompany them.

The attendance team will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam. Upon arrival the exams manager or invigilator will deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

### Access Arrangements

These will be made using Access arrangements on line. Students will be assessed by the Head of Inclusion/specialist teacher. A report will be sent to the examinations manager for specifying the arrangement required and why. Appropriate evidence will be provided and a data protection form signed.

Parents and teachers can also recommend an access arrangement based on a medical problem. Full details and a doctor's note need submitting to the exams office. Students again have to complete a data protection form.

## Candidates and Malpractice

The procedures for monitoring and reporting malpractice are in line with the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures.

There will be an invigilator log in each exam room and all incidents are logged.

For incidents of alleged malpractice the exams manager will interview the candidate along with the year manager if necessary. They will be given the opportunity to write a statement.

Statements will be taken from invigilators and the relevant JCQ form completed and submitted.

Parents will be informed of the allegation in writing and also the relevant achievement leaders and subject staff.

When the outcome is received from the board, parents and candidates will be notified immediately.

See coursework section 10.3 for coursework malpractice

## Clash Candidates

The exams manager will be responsible for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays as required.

## Special Consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The exams manager will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam or alternatively submit the request on-line.

## Coursework/Controlled Assignment and appeals against internal assessments

### Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Directors of Learning will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time and the exams manager will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers and the Directors of Learning.

### Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office and can also be found 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 coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification

- For GCSE/GCE candidates appeals should be made in writing by 30th April to the head of centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- For vocational candidates appeals should be made in writing within 5 days of receiving an assessment decision.
- The head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams manager and recorded for awarding body inspection.

## Coursework Malpractice

Where the malpractice is discovered after the candidate has signed a declaration form and work has been submitted to the awarding body the procedures in the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures will be followed.

Where the malpractice is discovered prior to this it will be investigated within the centre with sanctions applied within the centre. Please refer to the Malpractice/Code of Conduct Policy for assessing coursework assignments.

## Coursework Retention

The centre must retain all coursework relating to an examination until after the enquiries about results date is passed. The options then are:

- Return to the candidate
- Destroy in shredding waste
- Keep for teaching purposes – this can ONLY be done with the written consent of the candidate.

## Results, enquires about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

### Results

Candidates will receive a statement of results on results days in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses. Results will only be issued to candidates

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the head of centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the senior leader.

### EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

A candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this they will need to pay the full cost. Candidates must sign a form to consent to the EAR as marks can go down as well as up.

(See section 5: Exam fees)

### Access to scripts

After the release of results, candidates may request a copy of the script. Candidates must pay the costs associated with this request.

If a result is queried, the exams manager, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense. If the candidate is insistent on a re-mark against academy advice this must be paid for by the candidate.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

Re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

## Certificates

Certificates received by the centre are checked on receipt to ensure that candidates receive all the certificates for the courses completed.

Certificates are securely stored in the examinations office

Certificates are presented in person and candidates are asked to sign to indicate receipt.

Certificates may not be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party.

A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The centre retains certificates for three years. After this date they are destroyed in a secure manner.

## Security

External examinations are stored in accordance with the JCQ regulations outlined in the JCQ document Instructions for Conducting Examinations.

Controlled Assignments and Coursework are securely stored within departments as outlined in the schools controlled assignment policy.

## Controlled Assignments

Please refer to the JCQ policy and the school policy on controlled assignments as well as the school risk assessment.

## COVID-19

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

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.