

Exams Policy



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The policy is next due for review November 2018. 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 adhering to JCQs 'Instructions for Conducting Exams'.
- 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.

The Exams Policy will be reviewed every year in November.

The Exams Policy will be reviewed by The Exams Officer and the Assistant Headteacher or Deputy Head.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Where references are made to CIE regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.cie.org.uk.

Exam Responsibilities

The Headteacher of the Exam Centre:

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks;

- Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ/CIE document 'Suspected malpractice in exams and assessments';
- Ensures that the exam secure area meets JCQ/CIE regulations;
- Must check qualifications of Specialist Assessor/SENCo for Access Arrangements.

Exams Officer:

- Manages the administration of external exams;
- Ensure all exams store key holders are aware of responsibilities;
- Makes sure all confidential papers are stored correctly in secure area;
- 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 controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ/CIE guidelines;
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries;
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams;
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines;
- Check question papers against centre timetable and arrange papers in secure area in date order;
- Administers access arrangements (with the support of Specialist Assessor) and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ/CIE publications for Access Arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration;
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes;
- Produces seating plans for all external exams;
- Ensures JCQ posters are laminated and displayed outside exam rooms and CIE posters are used for CIE exams;
- Ensure all invigilators have training and know what to do in an emergency (see separate policy);
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges;
- Ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies 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 the SLT, any post results service requests;
- Ensures exam papers are checked on the day of the exam with another person;
- Co-operates with visits from JCQ/CIE and Awarding Bodies Inspection team;
- Provides all written information to candidates in advance. (A copy of JCQ/CIE rules and regulations together with a copy of their exam timetable).

Teachers are responsible for:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries;
- Provide details on estimated entries to Exams Officer when requested;
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer;
- Accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets;
- Supplying information on estimated entries, entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Raising Standards Lead and/or Exams Officer;
- Decisions on post-results procedures;
- Provide accurate exam course entry information via The Compass Accreditation Form.

The Specialist Assessor/SENCo is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements in accordance with JCQs Access Arrangements and reasonable adjustment regulations. For access arrangements and notifying the Exams Officer in good time so that they are able to process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- Working with Exams Officer to input key data requesting Access Arrangements.
- Providing Exams Officer with access to the Application for Access Arrangements, Data Protection Form plus supporting paperwork according to JCQ/CIE Regulations.
- Working with the Exams Officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

Lead Invigilator/Invigilators are responsible for:

- Collecting invigilation trays from the exams office.
- Arriving 15 minutes prior to exam start time to prepare the room, putting up posters and issuing exam equipment in the assigned room.
- Assisting the Exams Officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ/CIE regulations.
- Making sure candidates are instructed to write their names exactly as it appears on the attendance register.
- Making sure all collected scripts have names which match attendance register.
- Completing an accurate log sheet during the exam.
- At the end of the exam collect all exam papers and other materials and remain in the exam room until the Exams Officer or designated Lead Invigilator has collected live exam papers.
- To return all exam equipment to the exams office/secure area.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation of entries.
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ/CIE regulations.

Contingency Plan when Exams Officer is Absent

- There are three members of staff who have access to the exams key cabinet. (The Exams Officer, The Deputy Head, The Senior Administration Officer).
- All confidential exams post received can be signed for by Senior Administration Officer and all confidential exam post must be given to Exams Officer (or Deputy Head in Exams Officer's absence). In the absence of both, all post must be locked in the safe in the exams secure area.
- Deputy Head (Line Manager for Exams Officer) will undertake full responsibility for exams, meeting Inspectors, running exams, training invigilators, placing confidential postage into secure area, putting exam papers into the safe in secure area.

Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this school are decided by the Headteacher in partnership with the Assistant Head responsible for curriculum and the Teachers.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSE, Functional Skills, Cambridge Nationals, NCFE (Vocational Qualifications) and BTEC.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found on the centre's website or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the Exams Officer must be informed as soon as possible ideally by July and mid-September for May/June Series.

Informing the Exams Officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the subject teachers.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by teachers in consultation with the Assistant Headteachers.

Exam Series

GCSE exams and assessments are scheduled in the summer series. Functional Skills are scheduled during the test window as set by the awarding body. Entry Level Functional Skills are scheduled internally as appropriate.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Exam Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

The school accepts entries from private candidates, in particular Electively Home Educated candidates.

Entry deadlines are circulated to subject teachers via email and briefing meetings.

Subject teachers will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Officer to meet JCQ/CIE and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of the Head of Centre.

Early entries are made for the best outcomes for our most vulnerable pupils. Liaison with home schools will be made in cases where the pupils are dual roll.

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 action well in advance for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

BTEC entry fees are paid for by the centre.

Functional skills entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre.

The Local Authority will reimburse the school for any Year 11 EHE pupil at an agreed rate per entry.

Equality Legislation

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 candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ/CIE. This is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Access Arrangements

The Specialist Assessor/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 by the Specialist Assessor.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the Specialist Assessor.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Specialist Assessor with guidance from Exams Officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ/CIE access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Officer.

Private Candidates (EHE)

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

The Compass School wish to support EHE pupils with traditional GCSE subjects such as English, Maths, Science and Humanities. The cost per exam entry will cover exam fee, administration, security of papers, invigilation and facility costs.

Managing Invigilators

All invigilators follow information/guidance sheet issued during training by the Exams Officer when conducting all exams.

External staff could be used to invigilate exams.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Business Manager.

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

Invigilator rates of pay are set by the Headteacher of the school in line with other local schools.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Exam Days

The Exams Officer

The Exams Officer will make sure that JCQ/CIEs Regulations in accordance to exam times (ie morning exams cannot start before 8.30 am and no later than 9.30 am. For afternoon exams no earlier than 1 pm and no later than 2 pm.) No candidate can leave exam/isolation area before 1 hour of the start time. The Compass School's published start times are 9 am and 1.30 pm

In respect of CIE all start times will fall in line with key zone time.

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 avoid potential breaches of security an additional member of centre staff must check the time, date and any other paper details before a question paper is opened.

Where candidates sit in different rooms, question paper packets must be opened in the secure area with an additional member of staff and papers must be placed securely in signed sealed envelopes until the exam starts. This may be carried out within 60 minutes of the published start time.

A reader or scribe may have access to papers within the 60 minutes in order to prepare for the exam.

The Exams Officer will ensure all exam rooms have a working clock visible to all candidates.

The site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and will be advised of requirements well in advance. (Exam desks must be 1.25 metre apart.)

Subject specialists **MUST** not enter the exam room, however, may be present outside to assist with the identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ/CIE concerning who is allowed and what they can do.

Subject specialists are not allowed as collegiates. (Outside invigilators)

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ/CIE 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 subject teachers in accordance with JCQ/CIE's recommendations. (24 hours after the set exam.).

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed exam scripts to awarding bodies.

The Exams Officer will provide all written information to candidates in advance a copy of JCQ/CIEs Rules and Regulations together with a copy of their exam timetable for each exam series.

Candidates

Candidates who arrive over 50 minutes late may be entered, however a very good reason must be made to JCQ/CIE regarding this late arrival. Candidates arriving after this time will need a JCQ/CIE late arrival form stating that security has not been breached and that the candidate has been under supervision. Candidates must be made aware that their exam may not be accepted. The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam days.

The school's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. 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, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones, smart watches and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room. Watches must not be worn but may be placed on the exam desk.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ/CIE guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Exams Officer. However, the centre will offer a

supervised isolation area for those candidates who do not wish to continue and therefore may cause disturbance in the exam. These pupils will NOT be allowed re-entry into the exam room.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

Clash Candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

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's Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within two days of the exam.

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Internal Assessment

It is the duty of the Exams Officer to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will keep records 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 teachers. The Exams Officer will inform staff 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.

Internal Appeals Procedure

Appeals are accepted from the Head of Centre on behalf of a candidate, or group of candidates.

Stage 1

A written request must be made by the Exams Officer and authorised by the Head of Centre to the appropriate awarding body within two calendar weeks.

The appeal must be clearly set out and JCQ 'Appeals Form' (JCQ/App1) after an investigation and fall in line with JCQ/CIEs 'Code of Practice'. In the case of malpractice, malpractice documentation should be completed.

Stage 2

If the Head of Centre is dissatisfied with the outcome for Stage 1 Appeal, using JCQ/App1 should be sent to the relevant awarding body. A request for Stage 2 must be within 2 calendar weeks. Many Stage 2 Appeal results are final and therefore a Stage 3 option is not available.

Results

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days:

- In person at the centre
- By post (first class) to their home address

The results slip will be in the form of a centre produced document.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Headteacher

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Enquiries About Results (EAR)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark 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.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Head of 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.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates:

- In person at the school signed for;
- Certificates can be 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 3 years or more, despite official recommendations being reduced to one year.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results will be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

Return of Coursework/Controlled Assessments

Once certificates have been received all GCSE Coursework/Controlled Assessments can be collected.

Coursework will be available for collection and any uncollected work will be retained for three years.

Headteacher

Exams Officer

Date

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