

Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

External Examinations Policy

External Examinations Policy



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 Departments and the Exams Officer, for the approval of the governors.

1. Exam responsibilities

HEAD OF CENTRE

Overall responsibility for the school 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 examinations.

- advises the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Heads of Departments and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards;
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them;
- consults with Heads of Departments to ensure that necessary coursework is 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;
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes;
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges;
- manages the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams;
- submits candidates' controlled assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned controlled assessment 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;

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

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

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

- 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;
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

TEACHERS

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to Heads of Departments

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.

INVIGILATORS

- 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 check papers against subject register
- Sign attendance register in the examination room
- Slot in examination papers for pupils with access arrangements when examination papers are delivered to the examination room

CANDIDATES

- Contact Tutors and Heads of Departments if unsure of entry information
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Follow instructions during examinations and adhere to the rules and regulation set out in JCQ booklet Instructions for conducting examinations

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Heads of Departments and the School Leadership Team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCE, GCSE's, BTEC, Welsh Baccalaureate.

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 officer must be informed by the end of the summer term each year.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, ALNCo, subject teachers, Director of Learning, Senior Leadership Team and the Senior Tutors.

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, candidates will qualify for an entry to a qualification from an external awarding body if they:

- Complete 80% attendance
- Have made sufficient effort to merit entry

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled throughout the year depending on the needs of each curriculum area.

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

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Departments.

3.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams to candidates

4. Entries, entry details and late entries

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Director of Learning/Teacher

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Departments by the Exams Officer.

Late entries are authorised by the Senior Leadership Team, Curriculum Leaders and Examinations Officer.

5. Exam fees

5.1 Charges for re-sits

The centre will pay for the first attempt at an external examination

- **Payment for a re-sit of examinations will be the responsibility of the student/parent/guardian**
- If the student/parent/guardian is unable to pay for a re-sit due to difficult circumstance or financial problems contact the school as soon as possible

5.2 Charges for external candidates

External candidates that wish to sit an examination at the centre will be charged a fee of £100 per unit to cover the costs of entry, invigilation, postage and administration.

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements

6.1 DDA

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.

6.2 Special Needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the ALNCo, the Educational Psychologist and Specialist Teacher.

ALNCo 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. ALNCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access Arrangements

The Examinations Officer liaising with ALNCo will make special arrangements for candidates to take exams and:

- Submit completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies
- Arrange rooming, invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates

7. Estimated grades

The Heads of Department/ subject teachers will be responsible for the submission of estimated grades electronically via mark sheets

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for all external exams and internal exams where the timetable has been collapsed.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Business Manager. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Head of Centre and Business Manager.

8.2 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.

Caretaking staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Examinations Officer/ invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

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 Curriculum Leaders at the end of the exam session.

A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required.

The Examinations Officer will ensure that seating plans are placed in agreed areas prior to any external exam.

The Examinations Officer will ensure that exam signs are displayed in all exam rooms in accordance with current JCQ instructions.

The Exams Officer will ensure that names of candidates are placed on all exam desks prior to any external exam.

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 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 the Examinations Officer must be sent for so that the ratio of candidate to invigilators is maintained

The Exams Officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

9.2 Clash candidates

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

9.3 Special consideration

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 Examinations Officer, or the invigilator to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Controlled Assessment and appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Controlled Assessment

Heads of Departments will ensure that candidates complete all controlled assessment tasks by the end of the course.

Heads of Departments will ensure all controlled assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer/Receptionist will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the Examinations Officer by the Heads of Departments.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the Exams Officer.

11. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

11.1 Results

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

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 Leadership Team.

11.2 EARs

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

If a result is queried by centre staff, the candidate's written consent must be obtained, in this instance the centre will pay any fees.

If a result is queried by the candidate, the candidate's written consent must be obtained, in this instance the candidate pays any fees.

Parents/candidates should realise that marks and grades can go down as well as up or stay the same.

Candidates will be given information on the costs and procedures involved.

11.3 ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' 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.
(See also section 5: Exam fees)

12. Certificates

Students returning to Year 12 will receive their certificates during a tutorial period.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so. Candidates need to contact the school prior to collection of certificates so that the certificate is available to be signed for and collected.

Replacement certificates are issued by the Awarding Bodies on payment of a fee.

The centre retains certificates for one year, after which candidates must apply to the appropriate Awarding Body for results confirmation. A charge will be made by the Awarding Body for providing this information. Awarding Bodies DO NOT provide replacement.

13. Exam Contingency

The priority when implementing contingencies will be to maintain three principles:

- delivering assessments to published timetables
- delivering results to published timetables
- complying with regulatory requirements in relation to assessment, marking and standards.

The national examination timetable applies to GCSEs, AS levels, A-levels.

a. Disruption of teaching time – centre is closed for an extended period

Where there is disruption to teaching time and students miss teaching and learning, the centre will ensure learners are prepared, as usual, for examinations.

- In the case of modular courses, centre may advise learners to sit examinations in the next available series
- Centre will have plans in place to facilitate alternative methods of learning.

b. Learners unable to take examinations because of a crisis -centres remain open

- In the event of learners being unable to attend the centre to take examinations as normal, the centre will liaise with learners to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with the relevant awarding organisations. JCQ guidance on alternative site arrangements can be accessed through the JCQ website.
- centre will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- centre will apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates **where they have met the minimum requirements**. JCQ guidance on special consideration can be accessed through the JCQ website.

c. Centre unable to open as normal during the examination period

If the centre is unable to open as normal for examinations, they will inform each awarding body with which examinations are due to be taken as soon as is possible. As part of general planning for emergencies, the centre will cover the impact on examinations. The head of centre will decide whether it is safe for the centre to open. The head will take advice, or follow instructions from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the centre is able to open.

- centre will open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible
- centres will use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations (e.g. share facilities with other centres or use other public building, if possible)
- centres will offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series
- centres will apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements (see item 3, page 6).

d. Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts

- If there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts the centre will seek advice from awarding organisations and collection agency regarding collection. Centre will seek approval from awarding bodies before making their own arrangements for transportation.

- centre will ensure secure storage of completed examination scripts until collection.

e. Centre unable to distribute results as normal

If the centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates, or to facilitate post results services, centre will **contact awarding organisations about alternative options. i.e.:**

- centre will make arrangements to access its results at an alternative site
- centre will make arrangements to coordinate access to post results services from an alternative site
- centre will share facilities with other centres if this is possible.

f. Exams officer absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle

In the event of the examinations officer being absent at a critical stage of the examination cycle, in order to minimise risk to examination administration and avoid any adverse impact on students, centre will

- Refer to the Exam Entries / Exam Day Contingency Plan (as maintained by EO)
- Consult with EBs when necessary

E Pole

Head of Centre

J Slater

Exams Officer

February 2023

Date

Copies of this policy are available on our website, in policy folders on the school network and can be made available on request.

Date: February 2021

Reviewed: February 2023

Policy Next Review Date: February 2024