



WEST KIRBY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

EXAM POLICY

November 2016

WEST KIRBY GRAMMAR SCHOOL –EXAM POLICY

Contents

- 1. Exam responsibilities**
- 2. The qualifications offered**
- 3. Exam seasons and timetables**
- 4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes**
- 5. Exam fees**
- 6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements**
- 7. Estimated grades**
- 8. Managing invigilators and exam days**
- 9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration**
- 10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments**
- 11. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)**
- 12. Certificates**

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 by the exams manager.

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 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 exam boards
- oversees the production and distribution to 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 exam timetable that will affect them
- plans exam room usage and seating arrangements, displaying seat numbers for all students
- consults with teaching staff 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
- 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

- organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- provides for invigilators daily written instructions, seating plans and any special arrangements required
- prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades
- 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 any re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

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.

SENCO

- 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 Main Hall 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 officer.

Parents

- Provide signed reply slip to acknowledge receipt of student's Statement of Entry issued by the Examinations Office.

Candidates

- Understanding Statement of Entry after discussion with subject teachers
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Complying with board regulations, issued by the Examinations Office, for the conduct of the examinations.

Administrative staff

- Oversees the Parcel Force collection of exam papers.
- Arranges collection of heavy parcels of coursework.

2. The qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre, heads of subject and the senior leadership team.

The qualifications offered are GCSE and A levels and Cambridge Pre-U.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there are any changes of syllabus, the exams office must be informed immediately.

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 expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in December, February, March, May and June.

External exams are scheduled in November, May and June.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions where possible.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the head of centre, heads of subject and the senior leadership team.

3.2 Timetables

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

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of department, subject teachers and the head of Centre.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The request must be submitted to the Head of Centre.

The centre accepts external entries from former candidates only.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via notice board and staff weekly bulletin.

Late entries are authorised by heads of department and Head of Centre.

4.3 Retakes

Candidates are allowed 2 retakes per subject in GCE.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers and the heads of subject.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

5. Exam fees

All initial entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments.

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. If changes are made after the deadline, departments or candidates will be charged.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates.

(See also section 4.3: Retakes)

Enquiries about results are normally paid by the candidate.

(See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

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 SENCO, doctor, pastoral teacher and the educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

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 may be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the 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 exams officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the exams officer.

7. Estimated grades

Estimated grades

The heads of subject will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for external exams supervision and internal exams supervision where needed.

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

Securing the necessary Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

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

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office.

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

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.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

Designated invigilators 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 heads of department/faculty at the end of the exam session.

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 a member of staff must accompany them.

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 arranging supervision of candidates in a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision.

9.3 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 officer will then submit an on-line application for special consideration to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Coursework or Controlled Assessments

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

Heads of department will ensure all coursework/controlled assessments are ready for despatch at the correct time and the exams officer 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 heads of subject.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

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

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
- appeals should be made in writing to the head of centre who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

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

11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual statement of results on results days in person at the centre / by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae).

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 head of centre.

The centre aggregates at the end of year 12 for AS grades and whenever a re-sit module is taken.

11.2 EARs

Where a GCE result affects entry into Higher Education, a priority re-mark can be requested before the published deadline (26 August 2016).

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. All requests must be submitted to the exams office before the published deadlines (18 September 2017).

All applications for an enquiry about a result are normally paid for by the student. (See section 5: Exam fees)

Changes to grades following an enquiry, whether raised or lowered, have to be accepted by the candidate.

11.3 ATS

After the release of GCE results, candidates may request a priority photocopy of their script to assist their decision about a re-mark. (Deadline 25 August 2017).

As many scripts are now marked on-line students will often receive a photocopy and not the original script.

Requests must be received by 4 October 2017.

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

GCE and GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person or collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

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Head of centre: MRS A DUFFY

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Exams Manager: MRS D HILL-JONES

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Date: 1 September 2016