



EXAMINATIONS POLICY

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Purpose of the policy

The Bridge Centre is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently. This exam policy will ensure that:

- all aspects of the centre exam process is documented and other relevant exams-related policies, procedures and plans are signposted, thus “...*minimising risk to examination administration and any adverse impact on students, should the head of centre, relevant senior leader(s), examinations officer or any other key staff essential to the examination cycle.*” [JCQ Notice to Centres – examination contingency plan/examinations policy]
- the workforce is well informed and supported
- all centre staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- all exams and assessments are conducted in accordance with JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions, thus ensuring that “... *the integrity and security of the examination/assessment system is maintained at all times and is not brought into disrepute*” [JCQ General regulations for approved centres (GR) 1]
- exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure ways of working in the centre are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance.

The Head of Centre is responsible for the annual review and any required update of this policy.

The Management Committee is responsible for the approval and sign-off of this policy.

This policy will be communicated to all relevant centre staff.

This policy will be available on the school’s website.

Relevant staff will be provided with a copy of the policy for their files and training through appropriate meetings will be given, where necessary.

Invigilator training will take place under the leadership of the Exams Officer.

Roles and responsibilities overview

Head of centre (HOC)

“The head of centre is responsible to the awarding bodies for making sure all examinations/assessments are conducted according to the instructions, and the qualification specifications issued by the awarding bodies.

The head of centre may not appoint themselves as the examinations officer. [JCQ GR 1]

The head of centre will:

- be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations> (GR)
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations> (ICE)
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

The HOC will ensure:

- the National Centre Number Register (NCNR) annual update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR) is responded to
- the exams officer (EO) attends appropriate training events offered by awarding bodies, MIS providers and other external providers to enable the exam process to be effectively managed and administered
- centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process
- centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO
- *“that a teacher, a tutor or a senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined, is not an invigilator during the examination;”* [JCQ ICE 12]
- security within the examination process is managed as per JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions
- risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place

Exam contingency plan policy See Appendix 1

- required internal appeals procedures are in place

Internal assessment appeals policy See Appendix 2

- a disability policy showing the centre’s compliance with relevant legislation is in place

Disability policy See Appendix 3

Exams officer (EO)

*“The **examinations officer** is the person appointed by a head of centre to act on behalf of and be the main point of contact for, the centre in matters relating to the administration of awarding body examinations and assessments.”*

[JCQ GR 2]

The EO will:

- be familiar with the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/post-results-services>

- be familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- ensure key tasks are undertaken and key dates and deadlines met.
- train internal/external invigilators.

Senior leadership team (SLT)

- will be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

SENCo

- will be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
- will lead on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')
- if not the qualified specialist assessor, will work with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process
- will present when requested by a JCQ inspector, evidence of the specialist assessor's qualification

"SENCo's must hold on file for inspection purposes evidence that the assessor(s) is/are suitably qualified."
[JCQ AA& Reasonable Adjustments 7.4]

Subject Leaders (SLs)

- will ensure teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- will ensure teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body teaching-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- will ensure teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Teaching staff

- will undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- will keep themselves updated with awarding body teaching-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- will attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Invigilators

- will attend training, update, briefing and review sessions as required
- will provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate

Reception staff

- will support the EO in dealing with exam-related deliveries and dispatches with due regard to security at all times.

Site staff

- will support the EO in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources

Candidates

Where applicable in this policy, the term 'Candidates' refers to candidates and/or their parents/carers.

The exam cycle

The exams management and administration process that needs to be undertaken for each **exam series** is often referred to as the **exam cycle** and relevant tasks required within this grouped into the following stages:

- Planning
- Entries
- Pre-exams
- Exam time
- Results and post-results

This exam policy identifies the roles and responsibilities of centre staff within this cycle.

Planning

Information sharing

The HOC will:

- direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

The EO will:

- inform relevant centre staff of JCQ and awarding body documentation relating to the exam process that has been updated
- signpost relevant centre staff to information that should be provided to candidates
- as the centre administrator, approve relevant access rights for centre staff using awarding body secure extranet sites

Information gathering

The EO will:

- undertake an annual information gathering exercise in preparation for each new academic year to ensure data about all qualifications being delivered is up to date and correct
- collate all data into one central point of reference
- research awarding body guidance to identify administrative processes, key tasks, key dates and deadlines for all qualifications
- produce an annual exams plan of key tasks and key dates to ensure all external deadlines can be effectively met; inform key centre staff of internal deadlines
- collect information on internal exams to enable preparation for and conduct of [insert the titles these internal exams are referred to in the centre]

SLs will:

- respond (or ensure teaching staff respond) to requests from the EO on information gathering
- meet the internal deadline for the return of information
- inform the EO of any changes to information in a timely manner minimising the risk of late or other penalty fees being incurred by an awarding body
- familiarise themselves and their staff with the annual exams plan of internal deadlines

Access arrangements

The SENCo will:

- assess affected candidates (or work with the appointed specialist assessor) to identify access arrangements requirements thereby ensuring that
-

*“where a candidate with a learning difficulty requires an assessment of his/her needs, he/she is assessed by an appropriately qualified specialist assessor **as appointed by the head of centre;**” [JCQ GR 5]*

- gather **evidence of need** to support access arrangements
- liaise with teaching staff to gather evidence of **normal way of working**
- gather signed **data protection notices** from candidates where required
- apply for **approval** through Access arrangements online (AAO), where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- keep relevant evidence on file for JCQ inspection purposes
- liaise with the EO regarding exam time arrangements for access arrangement candidates
- ensure staff appointed to facilitate access arrangements for candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)
- ensure criteria for candidates allowed **separate invigilation within the centre** is clear, meets the requirements of JCQ access arrangements and best meets the needs of individual candidates and remaining candidates in main exam rooms

Separate invigilation within the centre Criteria: (as in JCQ AA)

Cognition and Learning Needs.

Communication and interaction Needs.

Sensory and Physical Needs

Candidates with Social, Emotional & Mental Health Needs

All identified by SENCO and SLT.

Non-examined assessment

The HOC will ensure:

- an **internal appeals procedure** is in place for a candidate (or parent/carer) to appeal against a non-examined assessment decision

Non-examined assessment appeals policy See Appendix 2

- irregularities are investigated and any cases of suspected malpractice reported to the awarding body, as required
- SLT will ensure:
- teaching staff have the necessary and appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills, and training to set, conduct, mark and authenticate candidates' work
- a process of internal moderation and standardisation is in place

SLs will ensure:

- teaching staff delivering GCSE qualifications follow instructions for non-examined assessment: https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Instructions_NEA_21-22_FINAL.
- teaching staff delivering GCSE, Entry Level or Project qualifications follow instructions for conducting coursework https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Coursework_ICC_21-22_v5
- for other qualifications, teaching staff follow appropriate instructions issued by the awarding body

Teaching staff will ensure:

- appropriate instructions for conducting non examined assessment are followed
- candidates are aware of JCQ or awarding body information for candidates on producing work that is internally assessed.

Invigilation

The EO will:

- provide an annual training event for new invigilators and an update event for invigilators in the conduct of exams
- ensure invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates understand their role (and the role of a role of a facilitator who may be supporting a candidate) and the rules and regulations of the access arrangement(s)
- collect evaluation of training to inform future events

Entries

The term 'entries' is used to describe entry/registration information for internally and externally assessed components, and certification of qualifications against which a result will be reported.

Estimated entries

The EO will:

- request estimated or early entry information, where this may be required by awarding bodies, from SLs in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met

Estimated entries collection and submission procedure

- SLT check and sign to confirm information is correct.
- Exams Officer returns estimated entries via online submission.
- Exams Officer sends e mail to the relevant Subject leaders requesting the information and a deadline set for return.
- SLs will:
 - provide information requested by the EO to the internal deadline
 - inform the EO immediately of any subsequent changes to information

Final entries

The EO will:

- request final entry information from SLs in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- inform SLs of subsequent deadlines for making changes to final entry information without charge
- confirm with SLs final entry information that has been submitted to awarding bodies
- ensure as far as possible that entry processes minimise the risk of entries or registrations being missed and reduce the potential for late or other penalty fees being charged by awarding bodies

Final entries collection and submission procedure.

- Exams Officer sets up template sheets for entries. SL's access and complete template with entries.
- SLT check to confirm information is correct.
- Exams Officer prints off entry sheets and sends to SL's with instructions for them to confirm accuracy.
- Exams Officer returns entries via online entry options.

SLs will:

- provide information requested by the EO to the internal deadline
- inform the EO immediately, or at the very least prior to the deadlines, of any subsequent changes to final entry information, which includes:
 - changes to candidate personal details
 - amendments to existing entries
 - withdrawals of existing entries
- check final entry submission information provided by the EO and confirm information is correct

Entry fees

The Exams budget is managed by the Business Manager in liaison with the SL's. The EO will organise the examinations process in the most efficient way:

- Ensuring exam submissions are timely and accurate is a key principle of an effective budget.
- Ensuring examination equipment is stored and well maintained.
- Ensuring access arrangements are planned efficiently and are cost effective.

Late entries

The EO will:

- have clear entry procedures in place to minimise the risk of late entries

SLs will:

- minimise the risk of late entries by
 - following procedures identified by the EO in relation to making final entries on time
 - meeting internal deadlines identified by the EO for making final entries.

Candidate statements of entry

The EO will:

- provide candidates with statements of entry for checking

Teaching staff will:

- ensure candidates check statements of entry and return any relevant confirmation required to the EO

Candidates (or parents/carers) will:

- confirm entry information is correct or notify the EO of any discrepancies

Pre Exams

Access arrangements

The SENCo will:

- ensure candidates are informed of the access arrangements that are in place for their exams and assessments

The EO will:

- issue individual exam timetable information to candidates
- issue relevant JCQ information for candidates
- where relevant, issue awarding body information to candidates
- issue centre exam information to candidates which will include information on:
 - exam clashes
 - arriving late for an exam

- absence or illness during exams
- what equipment is/is not provided by the centre
- when results and certificates will be issued
- the post-results services and how the centre will “... deal with candidates’ access to scripts, enquiries about results and appeals to the awarding bodies...” [JCQ GR 5.13]

Dispatch of exam scripts

The EO will

- identify and confirm arrangements for the dispatch of candidate exam scripts with the DfE ‘yellow label service’ or the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of the service

Estimated grades

SLs will:

- ensure teaching staff provide estimated grade information to the EO to the internal deadline (where this still may be required by the awarding body)

The EO will:

- submit estimated grade information to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline (where this may still be required by the awarding body)
- keep a record to track what has been sent

Internal assessment

SLs will:

- ensure teaching staff provide marks for internally assessed components of qualifications to the EO to the internal deadline
- ensure teaching staff authenticate candidates’ work as per awarding body requirements
- ensure teaching staff provide required samples of work for moderation to the EO to the internal deadline

The EO will:

- submit marks and samples to awarding bodies/moderators to meet the external deadline
- keep a record to track what has been sent
- log moderated work returned to the centre
- ensure teaching staff are aware of the guidelines in terms of retention and subsequent disposal of candidates’ work

Candidates will:

- authenticate their work as required by the awarding body

Invigilation

The EO will:

- provide an invigilation handbook or brief invigilators accordingly
- deploy invigilators effectively to exam rooms throughout an exam series
- allocate invigilators to exam rooms as per the required ratios
- facilitate the invigilation of access arrangement candidates

The SENCo will:

- liaise with the EO regarding facilitation and invigilation of access arrangement candidates

JCQ inspection visit

A member of SLT or the EO will

- be “available to accompany the Inspector **throughout** the course of his or her centre visit, including inspection of the centre’s secure storage facility.” [JCQ ICE Introduction]

Seating and identifying candidates in exam rooms

The EO will:

- ensure a procedure is in place to verify candidate identity (SIMS).

Verifying candidate identity procedure

Members of Centre staff who have been authorised by the head of Centre may be present at the start of the examination to assist with the identification of candidates.

Seating plan and attendance register in place outside and inside the examinations room.
ID cards/labels with name and candidate number placed on individual candidates' desk.

- ensure that invigilators are aware of the procedure
- provide seating plans for exam rooms as per JCQ and awarding body requirements.

Invigilators will:

- follow the procedure for verifying candidate identity provided by the EO
- seat candidates in exam rooms as instructed by the EO/in the seating plan

Security of exam materials

The EO will:

- have a process in place to record confidential materials delivered to the centre and issued to authorised staff
- have in place a recording system to track confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential
- receive, check and securely store question papers and other exam materials as per JCQ and awarding body requirements

Teaching staff will:

- adhere to the recording system to track confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential.

Timetabling and rooming

The EO will:

- produce a master centre exam timetable for each exam series
- identify and resolve candidate exam clashes
- identify exam rooms and specialist equipment requirements
- allocate invigilators to exam rooms as per the required ratios
- liaise with site staff to ensure exam rooms are set up as per JCQ and awarding body requirements
- liaise with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

The SENCo will:

- liaise with the EO regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

Site staff will:

- liaise with the EO to ensure exam rooms are set up as per JCQ and awarding body requirements

Transferred candidate arrangements

The EO will:

- liaise with the host or entering centre, as required
- process requests to the awarding body deadline

- where relevant (for an internal candidate) inform the candidate of the arrangements that have been made for their transferred candidate arrangements

Exam time

Access arrangements

The EO will:

- provide cover sheets for access arrangement candidates' scripts where required for particular access arrangements
- have a process in place to deal with emergency access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams
 - apply for approval through AAO where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

Candidate absence

Candidate absence policy

On completion of attendance register, absentees receive a phone call home by the EO, usually within ten minutes of the start of the exam.
If an absent candidate arrives within the first hour of the exam start time, they will then be given the full time to complete their exam. **(See candidate late arrival policy below)**

Invigilators will:

- be informed of the policy/process for dealing with absent candidates through training
- ensure that confirmed absent candidates are clearly marked as such on the attendance register and seating plan

Candidate behaviour

See malpractice below.

Candidate belongings

See unauthorised materials below.

Candidate late arrival

The EO will:

- ensure that candidates who arrive **very late** for an exam are reported to the awarding body as soon as practically possible after the exam has taken place
- warn candidates that their work may not be accepted by the awarding body

Invigilators will:

- be informed of the policy/process for dealing with late/very late arrival candidates through training
- ensure that relevant information is recorded on the exam room incident log

Candidate late arrival policy

Candidates who arrive later than one hour after the start time of the exam will not be able to sit their exam. Candidates considered as 'very late' (dependent upon length of exam), can complete the exam and their script will be sent in the normal way. **Within seven days of the exam a JCQ/VLA form will be completed.** Candidates who arrive late (within the first hour of start time, for an exam over one hour long), will be allowed to sit the exam, but the impact on the other candidates will be taken into consideration in terms of the arrangements to do so. The late candidate will be under supervision at all times.

Dispatch of exam scripts

The EO will:

- dispatch scripts as instructed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- keep appropriate records to track dispatch

Exam papers and materials

The EO will:

- organise exam question papers and associated confidential resources in date order in secure storage
- attach erratum notices received to relevant exam question paper packets
- collate attendance registers and examiner details in date order
- regularly check mail or inbox for updates from awarding bodies

Exam rooms

The HOC will:

- ensure only approved centre staff are present in exam rooms
- ensure that information relating to food and drink that may be allowed in exam rooms is clearly communicated to candidates.

Food and drink in exam rooms

The only drink allowed into the examination room is water in a clear, unlabelled bottle.
No food is permitted in the examination room.

The EO will:

- ensure exam rooms are set up as required in the regulations
- provide invigilators with appropriate resources to effectively conduct exams
- ensure sole invigilators have an appropriate means of summoning assistance
- ensure invigilators understand how to deal with candidates who may need to leave the exam room temporarily

SLT will:

- ensure a documented emergency evacuation procedure is in place

Emergency evacuation procedure

Emergency evacuation procedure See Appendix 4

The EO will

- ensure exam rooms are set up as instructed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- provide authorised exam materials which candidates are not expected to provide themselves
- brief invigilators on exams to be conducted on a session by session basis
- ensure invigilators and candidates are aware of the emergency evacuation procedure

Site staff will:

- ensure exam rooms are available and set up as requested by the EO
- ensure grounds or centre maintenance work does not disturb exam candidates in exam rooms
- ensure fire alarm testing does not take place during exam sessions

Invigilators will:

- conduct exams in every exam room as instructed in training/update events and briefing sessions

Candidates will:

- be required to remain in the exam room for the full duration of the exam.

Malpractice

The HOC will:

- ensure any cases of suspected malpractice (by centre staff, candidates, invigilators) are investigated and reported to the awarding body as required

SLT will:

- ensure support is provided for the EO and invigilators when dealing with disruptive candidates in exam rooms
- ensure that internal disciplinary procedures relating to candidate behaviour are instigated, when appropriate.

The EO will:

- provide an exam room incident log in all exam rooms for recording any incidents or irregularities
- action any required follow-up and reports to awarding bodies as soon as practically possible after the exam has taken place
-

Invigilators will:

- record any incidents or irregularities on the exam room incident log (for example, late/very late arrival, candidate or centre staff suspected malpractice, candidate illness, disruption or disturbance in the exam room, emergency evacuation).

Special consideration

The EO will:

- process appropriate requests for special consideration to awarding bodies
- gather evidence which may need to be provided by other staff in centre or candidates
- submit to awarding bodies to the external deadline

Candidates will:

- provide appropriate evidence to support special consideration requests, where required

Unauthorised materials

Arrangements for unauthorised materials taken into the exam room

On entry to the examination room, candidates leave their belongings in lockers or school office. Only permitted items are allowed to be taken to the exams desk. Candidates are reminded at the start of the exam, that JCQ unauthorised items are not to be brought into the examination room and a final opportunity to hand them in is given.

Invigilators will:

- be informed of the arrangements through training

Results and post-results

Internal assessment

SLs will ensure:

- teaching staff keep candidates' work, whether part of the moderation sample or not, secure and for the required period stated by JCQ and awarding bodies
- work is returned to candidates or disposed of according to the requirements

Managing results day(s)

SLT will:

- identify centre staff who will be involved in the main summer results day(s) and their role

Site staff will:

- ensure the centre is open and accessible to centre staff and candidates, as required.

Accessing Results

The EO will

- inform candidates in advance of when and how results will be released to them
- access results from awarding bodies under restricted release of results, where this is provided by the awarding body
- resolve any missing or incomplete results with awarding bodies
- issue statements of results to candidates on publication of results
- provide summaries of results for relevant centre staff on publication of results

Post-results services

The EO will:

- provide information to candidates and staff on the services provided by awarding bodies and the fees charged
- publish internal deadlines for requesting the services to ensure the external deadlines can be effectively met
- provide a process to record requests for services and collect candidate informed consent and fees where relevant
- submit requests to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline
- track requests to conclusion and inform candidates and relevant centre staff of outcomes
- update centre results information, where applicable.

The HOC will:

- ensure an **internal appeals procedure** is available where candidates disagree with the centre decision:
 - not to support an enquiry about results
 - not to appeal against the outcome of an enquiry about results

Enquiries about results policy See Appendix 5

Teaching staff will:

- meet internal deadlines to request the services and gain relevant candidate informed consent

Candidates will:

- meet internal deadlines to request the services
- provide informed consent and fees, where relevant

Analysis of results

Following the publication of results, the HOC/EO will:

- provide analysis of results to appropriate centre staff
- provide results information to external organisations where required
- undertake the Key Stage 4/16-18 Performance Tables checking exercise

Certificates

Certificates are provided to centres by awarding bodies after results have been confirmed. The process for issuing certificates to candidates is:

Issue of certificates procedure

The Exams Officer manages the issuing of certificates. Exams Officer checks and collates the individual candidate's certificates and then posts them registered post. Each envelope is stamped with school name and address for Royal Mail to return if necessary.

Candidates may:

- arrange for certificates to be collected on their behalf by providing the EO with written or email permission/authorisation; authorised persons must provide ID evidence on collection of certificates

Retention of certificates policy

The Exams Officer manages the retention of unclaimed or uncollected certificates. The certificates are stored in the secure exams storage until the candidate collects them.

Review

The EO will:

- provide SLT with an overview of the exam year, highlighting what went well and what could be developed/improved in terms of exams management and administrative processes within the stages of the exam cycle
- collect and evaluate feedback from staff, candidates and invigilators to inform review

SLT will:

- work with the EO to produce a plan to action any required improvements identified in the review

Retention of records

The EO will:

- keep records as required by JCQ and awarding bodies for the required period
- keep records as required by the centre's records management policy
- provide an exam archiving policy that identifies information held, retention period and method of disposal

Exam archiving policy

All examination materials are stored in the secure examinations cupboard.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Exam contingency plan policy
Appendix 2	NEA appeals policy
Appendix 3	Disability policy
Appendix 4	Emergency evacuation procedure
Appendix 5	Enquiries about results policy