



SANDWELL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Examinations Policy

Contents

1. Purpose of Policy
2. Exam responsibilities
3. Qualifications offered by Sandwell Community School
4. Exam seasons and timetables
5. Entries, entry details and late entries
6. Exam fees
7. Equality, Special Educational Needs and Access Arrangements
8. Estimated Grades
9. Contingency Planning
10. Managing Invigilators and exam days
11. Candidates- examination clashes, overnight supervision and Special Consideration
12. Internal Assessment and appeals against Internal Assessments
13. Results, Enquiries about Results (EARS) and Access to Scripts (ATS).
14. Certificates

1. Purpose of the 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.
- to ensure that all relevant and up-to-date JCQ and awarding body regulations are adhered to resulting in the integrity and security of the examination system being maintained at all times
- to ensure exam candidates understand the examination process and what is expected of them

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 campus, curriculum staff and the exams officer (EO).

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

The examinations policy will be communicated to all relevant staff by way of staff training, announcements on the school VLE (where the policy will be uploaded upon ratification)

2. Exam Responsibilities

Head of Campus

Has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre and advises on appeals and re-marks. 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 campus is also responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Please refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

The head of Campus will be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications

In addition to this the head of centre will also ensure:

- the National Centre Number Register (NCNR) annual update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR) is responded to
- the (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 who teaches the subject being examined, or a senior member of teaching staff who has had overall responsibility for the candidates preparation for the examination, is not an invigilator during the examination or on-screen test;”* [JCQ]
- 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/ written contingency plans are in place (outlined as a separate contingency plan policy)
- required internal appeals procedures are in place (outlined as a separate internal appeals procedure policy)
- a disability policy showing the centre’s compliance with relevant legislation is in place (as outlined as a separate disability policy)
- there are documented processes in place relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments
- staff are only entered for qualifications through the centre where entry through another centre is not available
- appropriate steps are taken where a candidate being entered for exams is related to a member of centre staff

Examinations Officer (Data Manager)

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

- has an understanding of the contents of the following annually updated JCQ publications: *General regulations for approved centres, Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE), Suspected malpractice in Examinations and Assessments and Post Results Services*
- ensures that the most up-to-date guidance and regulations from both the JCQ and awarding bodies is followed throughout the exam cycle
- advises the senior leadership team, heads of subject, subject teachers, class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- 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
- consults with heads of subject to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- liaises with heads of subject to confirm 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 also securely return completed scripts to the required destination

- 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 training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- prepares and presents reports to the SLT and the board of Governors showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made
- 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

Quality Nominee/Lead Internal Verifier/Lead Assessor is responsible for:

- ensuring that standards are met within the campus for BTEC programmes
- carries out the role of internal verifier/lead assessor in verifying the assignment brief and assessment decisions of the assessor
- Ensures that they annually update their accreditation as an internal verifier/lead assessor

Heads of Subject and their department teachers are responsible for:

- Providing guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the EO.
- accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets, campus declaration sheets and candidate record forms.
- working with the EO to submit candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks to moderators, with copies kept along with proof of posting.
- ensuring that the required coursework/controlled assessment samples are provided for moderation and standardisation.
- appropriately storing returned coursework/controlled assessment materials
- Appropriate identification and testing of candidates
- notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- keeping themselves up-to-date on the latest developments from their chosen awarding body and also attend any relevant training

The SEN Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- ensuring that they are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*
- Taking the lead on all matters relating to Access Arrangements, including:

- working with teachers to identify and test candidates requirements for access arrangements and notifying the EO in good time so that they are able to process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)
- working with the EO to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.
- ensuring that the relevant staff are trained to facilitate the access arrangements required

Invigilators are responsible for:

- assisting the EO in the efficient running of exams in accordance to the JCQ regulations
- attending all training, updates, briefings and review sessions relating to exam invigilation as required
- the collection of examination papers and materials from the office before the start of the exam
- the collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return direct to the examinations officer
- adhering to a strict agreement of confidentiality relating to all examination

Administrators are responsible for:

- dealing with exam-related deliveries and dispatches with due regard to security at all times.

Site staff are responsible for:

- supporting the EO in relevant matters relating to exam rooms

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation of all entries
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own
- Understanding the rules and regulations of examinations and adhering to them at all times

3. Qualifications offered by Sandwell Community School

The qualifications offered at Sandwell Community School are decided by the Senior Leadership Team in conjunction with Heads of Subject.

The qualifications offered are GCSE (full and short course), Cambridge Nationals, BTEC, Functional Skills and The Princes Trust.

Informing the EO of any changes to qualifications is the responsibility of Heads of Subject and the Senior Leadership Team. The EO must be informed by no later than the end of the academic year.

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body. Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers and subject teachers.

4. Exam Seasons and Timetables

Internal exams (mock/trial exams) are scheduled in December/January. They are held under external exam conditions.

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

Some external qualifications are offered on an on-demand basis and/or on-screen.

Exam timetables will be distributed by the EO for each exam season once they have been confirmed.

5. Entries, Entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the subject teacher, Head of Subject and Head of Campus.

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The campus does not accept entries from external candidates.

The campus does not act as an exam centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Subject via email, briefing meetings, the VLE and in person. Heads of Subject are responsible for relaying this information to their departmental staff.

The EO will ensure that subsequent deadlines, such as amendment or withdrawal deadlines are also circulated to Heads of Subject.

Heads of Subject and their departmental staff are responsible for ensuring that all entry information provided to the EO is accurate. The EO will always provide a final entry list for staff to check and sign prior to entries being submitted.

Late entries are authorised by the Head of Subject and/or the Head of Campus.

Heads of Subject are required to provide estimated entry information to the EO to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

GCSE and Functional Skills resits/retakes are allowed. Resit decisions will be made by subject teachers in consultation with their Head of Subject and Head of Campus.

6. Exam Fees

The campus will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates.

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided there are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies

The EO will publish the deadline for action well in advance for each exams series.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates:

- If they fail to sit an exam
- If they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances

Resit fees are paid for by the campus.

7. Equality, Special Educational Needs and Access Arrangements

Equality

All exam campus staff must ensure they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

The campus 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. This is the responsibility of the Head of Campus.

Special Educational Needs

A candidate's special educational needs requirements are determined by the SENCo.

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 can be granted during the course and in the exam.

Access Arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCo with support from the EO.

The SENCo is responsible for completing access arrangement applications including a detailed evidence of need and documenting the results of all assessments undertaken.

The EO is then responsible for submitting those completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the EO with the SENCo.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCo with the EO.

8. Estimated Grades

Where required, Heads of Subject will be required to submit estimated grades to the EO when requested. The EO will then submit these to the relevant awarding bodies by the published deadline.

9. Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head teacher and the Head of Campus in consultation with the EO.

Contingency plans are currently available to staff via our VLE and can also be made available via e-mail, briefing meetings and pigeon hole. Our contingency plan falls in line with the joint guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and the awarding bodies.

10. Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

Managing Invigilators

Where possible, Internal staff will be used to invigilate examinations.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Head of Campus/EO. Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the EO and the School Business Manager.

DBS fees for securing such clearance would be paid for by the Campus.

External invigilators rates of pay are set by the Local Authority (LA).

Invigilators are timetabled, trained and briefed by the EO. Experienced invigilators will receive a refresher training session every academic year. New Invigilators will receive a full training session in their first academic year and subsequent refresher training in the years that follow.

Invigilators will be provided with all of the materials/forms they will need to be able to carry out their duties before, during and at the end of each examination.

Exam Days

The EO will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationary and materials available for the invigilator.

Site staff with input from the EO are responsible for setting up the allocated examination rooms

The lead invigilator will be responsible for starting and finishing all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

All invigilators present in the exam room must follow the rules defined by the JCQ. They must ensure that candidates are seated in accordance to the seating plan for that exam room. Any changes must be recorded for future reference.

In practical exams subject teachers will be allowed to invigilate in accordance with the JCQ guidelines.

Exam papers must not be read by invigilators or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to subject staff after an examination in accordance with the JCQ guidelines.

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

11. Candidates- examination clashes, overnight supervision and Special Consideration

Candidates

The EO will provide candidates with written information in advance of each exam series. A briefing session may also be held by the EO/ Head of Campus.

The Campuses published behaviour policy including rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

In an exam room, candidates must not have access to items other those clearly allowed in the instructions on the examination paper, the stationery list or the specification for that subject. This is especially related to access to mobile phones and/or other electronic communication or storage devices with text or

Examinations Policy

14 February 2017

Review Date: February 2018

digital facilities; this includes smartwatches. Any items of this nature must not be taken into the exam room.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the campus accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the duration of the exam at the discretion of the EO or senior invigilator present in the exam room.

For examinations that last longer than one hour or more, candidates must stay under campus supervision for the first hour after the published start time for that examination. For examinations last less than one hour, candidates must remain under campus supervision until the published finishing time of that examination. Pupils who decide to leave the exam room will not be allowed back in.

Note: Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return to the exam room immediately. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

The EO in conjunction with the Head of Campus is responsible for the handling of late or absent candidates on the exam day. Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends on the day of their exam.

Clash Candidates

The EO in conjunction with the Head of Campus is responsible as necessary for ensuring clash candidates are supervised. If this requires supervision overnight then this must involve the candidates' parents/carers.

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer a bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during the exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the campus, the EO or the invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 4 school days of the exam.

The EO will submit a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 school days of the exam.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The schools emergency evacuation procedure is available to all invigilators in each exam room.

Candidates are instructed to follow the instructions of the invigilators.

Exam conditions will continue even when candidates leave the room.

The senior invigilator will ensure that all question papers and scripts remain in the exam room and that person will also be the last person to leave the room.

The invigilators will accompany the candidates to the required assembly point and they will ensure that candidates remain separated from the rest of the student population

The senior invigilator will make a record of the time and duration of the evacuation, along with any other relevant information. The EO will then report the incident to the awarding body, as specified within JCQ guidance.

Upon returning to the exam room, the senior invigilator will remind candidates that they remain under exam conditions and ensure candidates receive the full time allocation of the exam.

12. Internal Assessments and Appeals

It is the duty of Heads of Subject and their subject teachers to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The EO will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the EO by the Heads of Subject.

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy available from the EO.

13. Results, Enquiries about Results (EARS) and Access to Scripts (ATS).

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results day, either in person at the campus or by post to their home address. If results are received by post then they will be sent on results day and therefore be received in the following days. They will be sent First Class.

Arrangements for the campus to be open on results days are made by the Head Teacher in conjunction with the Head of Campus.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of Campus.

Enquiries about Results (EAR's)

EAR's may be requested by campus staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the EO and Head of Campus will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the campus expense.

When the campus does not support a candidate's or parent's request for an EAR. A candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requests this against the advice of school staff, they will be charged.

Further information regarding this can be found in our Internal Appeals policy and can be requested from the EO.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within 3 days of the results.

Campus 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.

Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for at the campus

Certificates can be collected by a third party on behalf of a candidate, provided they are authorised to do so. An individual collecting certificates on a candidates behalf must be able to produce a letter signed by the candidate and photographic ID to confirm their identity in order for the certificates to be released.

The campus will retain certificates for five years.

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

Ratification

Signed:..... K Morgan

Head Teacher:

Date:

Signed:..... J McBride

Chair of Governors:

Date:

Implementation: 14.02.2017 (Academic Year 2016-17)

Review Date: February 2018