

School Examination Policy September 2025-26

◆ Introduction

This policy provides a comprehensive framework for the fair, transparent, and consistent administration of examinations at our school. It sets out detailed procedures for handling exceptional circumstances (special consideration), access arrangements, emergencies, and related issues in line with JCQ regulations. The aim is to protect the integrity of exams while supporting candidates' legitimate needs.

Purpose and Aims

This policy aims to:

- Uphold fairness and integrity in exams by following JCQ standards.
- Support candidates who face temporary illness, injury, or exceptional circumstances that affect performance.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (e.g., Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018).
- Provide clarity for staff, candidates, and parents on procedures and expectations.

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 Deputy Head Academic and the Examinations Officer.

Legal and Regulatory Context

We are committed to following:

- JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) – for exam room conduct, security, and invigilation.
- JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments – for pre-approved accommodations.
- JCQ A guide to the special consideration process – for temporary adverse effects.
- JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures – for incidents of cheating or maladministration.
- The Equality Act 2010 – to ensure no candidate is disadvantaged because of disability or protected characteristic.
- Data protection and GDPR – to protect sensitive data.

Roles, Responsibilities, and Contacts

Head of Centre: Holds ultimate accountability for exams, special consideration decisions, and policy implementation.

Exams Officer, supported by Deputy Head Academic: Day-to-day lead; oversees secure storage of papers, seating plans, invigilation, access arrangements, and special consideration applications.

Head of Learning Enhancement (SENCo): Coordinates access arrangements and evidence for candidates with learning difficulties or medical needs.

Heads of Department: Completion of coursework mark, exam entry and declaration sheets; adherence to deadlines, coordination and moderation of coursework. Involvement in post-results procedures

Teachers: Provide accurate information and evidence; identify students needing support or access arrangements; report concerns.

Candidates: Follow all JCQ rules, report issues promptly, provide supporting evidence for claims.

Contact details: Available on the school website and upon request for all staff involved in the exam process.

Examination Procedures and Conduct

Timetables: Published at least 4 weeks before exams; shared with candidates and staff.

Invigilation: Only trained, impartial staff or external invigilators are used.

Exam Room Standards: Quiet, well-ventilated, compliant with JCQ spacing and signage.

Candidate Behaviour: Candidates must not bring in unauthorised materials (e.g., mobile phones, notes). Breaches lead to formal investigation under JCQ rules.

Attendance Recording: Registers completed at start of each exam; incidents logged immediately.

Detailed Exam Day Checklist

Exams must be invigilated by trained staff who understand JCQ regulations. A minimum of one invigilator per 30 students is recommended.

Invigilators should not be the subject teacher of the students sitting the exam.

Invigilators are responsible for maintaining exam conditions, recording late arrivals, toilet breaks, incidents, and reporting concerns immediately to the Exams Officer/Deputy Head Academic.

For invigilators:

- Arrive at least 30 minutes before the exam starts.
- Check the identity of each candidate.
- Check that only permitted materials (e.g., black pens, calculators if allowed) are on desks.
- Start exams precisely on time.
- Supervise continuously and discreetly.
- End exams precisely; collect all scripts securely.
- Log any incidents or concerns (e.g., illness, disruption) on the incident report form.

Student Conduct and Expectations

- ✍ Students are expected to follow the same rules as in external exams:
- ✍ No talking, note-passing, or disruptive behaviour
- ✍ Mobile phones, smartwatches, and any unauthorised materials must be handed in before the exam
- ✍ Students must bring their own equipment in a transparent case
- ✍ Bags and coats should be left at the front or outside the exam room
- ✍ Silence must be maintained from the moment students enter the room until they leave.

✍ Toilet Breaks

Toilet breaks are not permitted during the first 30 minutes or final 30 minutes of any exam.

Breaks during the permitted window must be:

- ✍ Requested by raising a hand
- ✍ Accompanied by a staff member (where possible)
- ✍ Logged in the Toilet Break Register with exact times noted
- ✍ Time is not compensated; the exam continues during the absence

Exceptions are allowed for students with pre-approved access arrangements.

Late Arrivals and Emergencies

- ✍ Students arriving late may be admitted at the discretion of the invigilator or SLT.
- ✍ If appropriate, extra time may be allowed based on time lost.
- ✍ Fire alarms or lockdowns must follow school emergency procedures. Invigilators must ensure safety while maintaining exam integrity where possible.

✍ Record-Keeping and Review

- ✍ Seating plans, attendance registers, incident logs, and invigilator notes must be retained by the department or Exams Officer for at least one academic year.
- ✍ This policy is reviewed annually or in response to changes in JCQ guidance.
- ✍ Heads of Department and the Exams Officer are jointly responsible for ensuring policy compliance.

Access Arrangements

Purpose: To provide a level playing field for candidates with long-term conditions or disabilities.

Examples of Arrangements: Extra time (25% standard), use of a reader, scribe, rest breaks, modified papers.

Minimum Requirements for Approval:

- ✍ Formal medical or psychological report (e.g., diagnosis of dyslexia, ADHD, physical disability).
- ✍ Or professional evidence from a qualified specialist (e.g., Educational Psychologist, SENCo or Specialist Teacher).
- ✍ Evidence must be current (within 2 years for most conditions).
Implementation:
 - ✍ Arrangements are set up before exams start and are the normal way of working
 - ✍ Staff involved are trained appropriately, and briefed to provide discreet, non-stigmatising support.

Special Consideration

Definition: Post-exam adjustment to marks/grades due to temporary illness, injury, or trauma at the time of the exam.

- ✍ Eligible Circumstances (with evidence requirements):
 - ✍ Severe short-term illness on exam day (e.g., flu with fever, migraine with **significant** impact).
 - ✍ Bereavement of close family (parent, sibling, grandparent) within 6 weeks of the exam – death certificate or funeral notice may be required.
 - ✍ Hospitalised for emergency treatment on exam day.
 - ✍ Sudden trauma (e.g., accident, serious incident on day of exam).
 - ✍ Disruption during the exam (e.g., fire alarm evacuation, serious technical failure).

Ineligible Circumstances:

- ✍ Minor illnesses (cold, mild headache) without substantial effect.
- ✍ Stress or anxiety not linked to a specific incident and without medical evidence.
- ✍ Long-term conditions (managed through access arrangements, not special consideration).
- ✍ Candidate mismanagement (e.g., oversleeping, wrong date).

Evidence and Process:

- ✍ Candidates/parents must inform the Exams Officer within 7 days.
- ✍ Supporting evidence (medical note, statement from a professional) is required.
- ✍ Exams Officer submits the formal request to the awarding body.
- ✍ JCQ determines the % mark adjustment (up to 5% usually).
- ✍ **Note: No grade can be changed – only marks may be adjusted based on JCQ criteria.**

Candidate Absence and Missed Exams

- ✍ Valid Absence: E.g., hospital admission on exam day. Requires a doctor's note or equivalent.
- ✍ Exams Officer Action:
- ✍ Submit absence record and evidence to the awarding body if needed.
- ✍ Explore alternative exam arrangements if possible.
- ✍ Invalid Absence: E.g., oversleeping, transport delays without valid evidence – marked as “Absent” with no mark awarded

Malpractice and Maladministration

This may involve malpractice: Cheating, bringing unauthorised materials, collusion or maladministration: Errors by staff in administering or supervising exams.

Procedure:

- Report immediately to Exams Officer and Head of Centre.
- Investigation documented in full.
- Awarding body informed and sanctions applied if required.

Appeals and Complaints

- Appeals (e.g., denied special consideration) are submitted in writing within 5 days to Head of Centre.
- Head of Centre will review evidence and provide a written response in 10 days.
- Other complaints (e.g., invigilator behaviour) follow the school's Complaints Policy.

Staff Training and Communication

- Annual Training: Exams Officer and invigilators trained on JCQ updates, incident reporting, safeguarding.
- Regular Updates: Changes in JCQ policies shared at staff meetings.
- Information for Candidates: Key rules shared via assemblies, newsletters, and written notices.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Secure records of access arrangements, special consideration requests, and incidents.
- Data monitored for patterns and fairness.
- Policy reviewed annually by the Exams Officer and Senior Leadership Team.

Contingency Planning

- Emergency plans (e.g., fire alarm, lockdown) reviewed and practiced.
- Evacuation plans visible in each exam room.
- Communication system in place to notify candidates/parents in emergencies.

Reasonable Adjustments (Equality Duty)

- Commitment: No candidate disadvantaged because of disability or need.
- Adjustments made case-by-case, in line with the Equality Act and JCQ guidelines. See separate Exams Equalities Policy.

Remote Assessment and Digital Exams

- If needed (e.g., pandemic), online exams follow strict security.
- Candidates briefed in advance.
- Integrity upheld through supervision and technical safeguards.

Invigilator and Staff Code of Conduct

- Remain neutral and fair to all candidates.
- No personal opinions, no assisting with answers.
- Report any misconduct or incidents immediately.

Health and Safety in Exams

- Exam rooms meet all safety standards (e.g., fire exits clear, first aid available).
- Exams Officer responsible for daily safety checks during exam periods.

Examinations Policy – Section: Results and Post-Results Services (2025-26)

Post-results Services

- Enquiries about Results (EAR): Review of marking if concern about result.
- Access to Scripts: Copy of marked exam paper available upon request.
- Appeals: Managed according to awarding body guidelines.

1. Results Release

Results are officially released to candidates on specific national dates – for example, A-level results on 14 August and GCSE on 21 August. Results must only be issued on or after the agreed date, and through approved methods (e.g. in-person collection, Email). Results will not be issued to third parties unless written consent is provided by the candidate. **All candidate data is treated as confidential.**

2. Post-Results Services

Following the publication of results, candidates can request post-results services in accordance with JCQ guidelines. These include: - Clerical re-check (Service 1): Checks marks recorded, totalled, and correctly assigned. - Review of Marking (Service 2): Second examiner reviews marking. - Priority Review (Service 2P): For university-bound candidates requiring urgent review. - Access to Scripts (ATS): Scripts can be requested for review or teaching. All services require candidate consent via JCQ forms and must meet deadlines. Fees apply unless waived by the centre.

3. Appeals

If a candidate remains dissatisfied after a review, a formal appeal can be submitted. Appeals must follow JCQ's appeals process and are considered only if there's evidence of procedural error or irregularity.

4. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All post-results documentation (e.g. consent forms, service requests, correspondence) must be retained for at least 6 months. Candidate results **must not** share publicly without express consent and are stored securely.

5. Exams Officer and SLT Responsibilities

The Exams Officer must: - Inform candidates and staff about deadlines and available services prior to results day. - Establish a structured plan for results collection and communication. - Provide clear guidance to candidates regarding next steps. - Prepare contingency plans for system failures or urgent support. The Senior Leadership Team will support decision-making for post-results outcomes and appeals.

Document Control

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- Prepared by: Shailly Habibi – Exams Officer
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