



## Exams Policy

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The policy is next due for review September 2020



This policy should be read in conjunction with the following JCQ Publications:

- *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments;*
- *Instructions for conducting coursework;*
- *Instructions for conducting examinations;*
- *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments; and*
- *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments – Policies and Procedures*

All the above policies are available for viewing (hard copy) from the Exams Office or (online) via the JCQ website – [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

The purpose of this examination policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient exams system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.
- To ensure the integrity and security of the examination / assessment system is maintained by following the regulations provided.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand, and implement this policy.

The exams policy will be reviewed every year.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Exams officer, Senior Leadership team and Head of centre.



## ***Exam Centre Responsibilities***

### **Headteacher / Head of Centre:**

- The Head of Centre is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements in order to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations / assessments at all times.
- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*.
- Has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Centre delivers qualifications, as required by the awarding body, in accordance with relevant equality legislation.
- Ensures that all policies and procedures relating to examinations are up to date and contain the latest information available.
- In conjunction with the Exams Officer and SLT, ensure that all candidates are registered for examinations within the published timeframe from the awarding bodies.
- In conjunction with the SENCO and Exams Officer, ensure that all candidates that qualify for Access Arrangements or reasonable adjustments have been declared via the AAO / CAP portals by the published deadlines and that the appropriate documentation is retained on file within the centre.
- Retains a workforce of appropriate size and competence to undertake the delivery of qualifications as required by an awarding body. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications.
- Ensures that the Centre and the Centre staff adhere to the regulations as set out by JCQ and the awarding bodies in the *General Regulations* and *Information for Conducting Examinations* publications.



- Is the person appointed by the Head of Centre to act on behalf of, and be the main point of contact for, the centre in matters relating to the general administration of awarding body examinations and assessments.
- Manages the administration of internal exams and external examinations.
- Advises the Headteacher, Leadership team and teaching staff, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Oversees the production and distribution to all centre 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.
- Advises centre staff on how to submit registrations and entries, and process the centres' registration and entries to the awarding bodies via the correct channels.
- Provides centre staff with awarding body / qualification updates and administers the clerical checking and entry of candidates registered on qualifications.
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- Advises teaching staff on the general procedures and documentation relating to the administration of controlled assessments, coursework, non-examination assessments and portfolios ensuring they are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms 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 ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- Liaises with, and assists, the centre's SENCO to administer access arrangement requirements and applications for temporary special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publications for Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration to include the ordering of modified papers if applicable.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Line manages all exam invigilators.
- Ensures candidates' non-examined coursework / controlled assessment marks / portfolios are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the LT, any post results service requests.
- Annually updates the Centre's Examination Policies in accordance with JCQ guidelines, under the direction of the Head of Centre.
- Creates and maintains the day to day operational exams office hand book to ensure that, should there be an absence, the day to day running of the Exams Office is not disrupted.



**Directors of Learning/Curriculum Leaders** are responsible for:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- Highlighting and providing accurate information on curriculum changes within the timescales provided by the Exams Officer.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer.
- Accurate completion of non-examined coursework / controlled assessment / portfolio mark sheets and centre declaration sheets provided by awarding bodies.
- Decisions on post-results procedures.
- Disseminating relevant qualification changes / information to subject staff to enable occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications.
- Ensuring that all BTEC “on-demand” tests are requested via the Exams Office in a timely manner.

**Teachers** are responsible for:

- Supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or Exams Officer.
- Working with the SENCO to identify those that require Access Arrangements are tested and to ensure that candidates with granted Access Arrangements are given access to suitable materials to aid in learning of qualifications.
- To ensure that they are suitably qualified to ensure competent delivery of qualifications as directed by Directors of Learning / Curriculum Leaders.

The **SENCO** is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and the process of applying to gain approval (if required).
- Ensure that candidates that have SEN provision have been identified and that the appropriate evidence is obtained and retained on the candidates file.
- Working with the Exams Officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.
- Submitting the applications for Access Arrangements via the online AAO / CAP portals.



**Invigilators** are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- Undertaking Invigilator training at the start of each exam season to ensure that they are aware of the current changes in exam legislation, examination policies and matters of Safeguarding.
- Insuring that all examination rooms are correctly set up in accordance with published seating plans
- 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 ensuring their return to the exams office.
- Completion of all exam day related documents in a timely manner.
- Reporting all occurrences of Malpractice / suspected Malpractice to the Exams Officer immediately.
- Ensuring that all examination related materials and stationary are returned to the Exam secure room at the end of an exam.

**Candidates** are responsible for:

- Confirmation and understanding of entries.
- Understanding non-examined coursework / controlled assessment / portfolio regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

## ***Qualifications Offered***

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Headteacher and Leadership team.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSE's, Certificate's and BTEC's.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's *Key Stage 4: Years 9, 10 & 11 Option Information Booklet* for that year. This booklet is given out to all Year 8 students prior to choosing their respective options. Information for parents is also included on the "Curriculum Overview" section of the Centre's website.

If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by the end of July.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Directors of learning/Curriculum leaders.



Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Directors of Learning/Curriculum Leaders in consultation with the subject Teachers.

## ***Exam Series***

Internal exams (mock or practice exams) and assessments are scheduled in November, February, March, April, May and June. Years 7, 8 and 9 are only tested in English, Maths and Science (EMS). Years 10 and 11 are tested in every subject where there is a mainstream exam.

All examination timetables will be made available to all candidates and parents prior to sitting examinations to assist with planning and revision.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in November (Resits only), May and June.

All exams (internal and external, including BTEC Online tests) are held under external exam conditions in accordance with the JCQ Publication: *Instructions for conducting examinations 2019 - 2020* (ICE)

BTEC Online tests are available all year round and are thus treated as “on-demand” tests. Directors of Learning / Curriculum Leaders will liaise with the Exams Office to ensure that the tests are available for the candidates on the required date.

The Headteacher and Leadership team decide which exam series are used in the centre.

## ***Exam Timetables***

Once confirmed, the Exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

The timetables will be issues to candidates and published on the website with a link sent home for parents to access.

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

The centre does not accept entries from private candidates.

The centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Directors of Learning / Curriculum Leaders via email.

Directors of Learning / Curriculum Leaders will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation of a member of the Leadership team and Exams Officer.

The Hamble School do not undertake in GCSE examination re-sit's in November. All students that require a re-sit should contact their FE education provider.

## **Exam Fees**

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.

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

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the subject department.

Examination entry fee reimbursements will be 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.*

Re-sit fees are paid by the candidates to the relevant FE Education provider.





## ***Equality Legislation***

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation as set out in *The Hamble School, Equalities Duty Policy*, which can be found in **section 5** of this Examination Policy Handbook.

The centre 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 Exams Officer, Headteacher and Leadership team.

## ***Access Arrangements***

The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams. Further information is provided in *the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEN/D) Policy* in **section 5** of this Exam Policy Handbook.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCO/SEN Administrator.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer and SEN Administrator.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Officer and SEN Administrator.

## ***Contingency Planning***

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer, Headteacher and Leadership team. Each year the plans are reviewed and updated in accordance with JCQ instructions. The exam contingency day, as outlined by JCQ, is added to the school calendar and communicated to staff, students and parents.

A copy of the Examination Contingency plan is available in **section 1d** of this Examination Policy Handbook and also on the school's website. The plan should be read in conjunction with the Exam office operational handbook to ensure that there are no delays in operation.



## ***Estimated Grades***

Directors of Learning / Curriculum Leaders are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

## ***Managing Invigilators***

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations during the Y11 Spring Mock exams and Summer GCSE Exams.

These invigilators will be used for internal (Y11 mock) exams and external (Summer GCSE) exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

All invigilators are to be DBS cleared and also attend Safeguarding training before starting work as an invigilator. Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR officer. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

All invigilators will be required to complete annual Invigilator Training as part of their own CPD. Copies of training certificates will be retained on file by the Exams Officer.

All invigilators will be suitably trained to cover a wide variety of tasks within the role to include the tasks of acting as Scribes / Readers for Access Arrangement Students when required.

Invigilators rates of pay are set by the HR Officer, Headteacher and Senior Bursar.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer.



## ***Malpractice & Maladministration***

The Head of Centre, along with the Exams Officer, will take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during the course of and after examinations have taken place.

Any incidents of malpractice (alleged, suspected or actual) will be reported to the awarding bodies immediately using the approved communication channels.

Any incidents reported will be investigated thoroughly in accordance with the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures, 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020*. Any investigations and subsequent evidence will be presented to the awarding bodies as required.

## ***Secure Examination Storage and Access to Storage / Exam Papers***

In compliance with JCQ regulations, the Centre has a designated room for the safe storage of exam papers. This room is inspected on an annual basis by JCQ inspectors. Only the Exams Officer and Exams Assistant are permitted entry to the room unless in an emergency.

The keys to the Exams Secure Storage are kept in a safe in the Exam Officers office. There are two sets of main Exams Secure Storage keys – one set remains in the safe for emergency purposes only. The other set are taken in and out of the safe as required by the Exams Officer. The Exams Officer will have the keys on their person at all times. The code to the safe is held by the Exams Officer and a designated member of SLT.

Exam Papers and stationary arrive via courier (Parcel Force). The exam papers are logged in at Reception using the designated Examinations Log Form. Reception then informs the Exams Officer of their arrival who in turn signs the Examinations Log Form to acknowledge receipt of the exam papers / stationary.

The Exams Officer checks the parcels received in the Secure Storage room against the dispatch log and files the exam packets away in the safe.

Any discrepancies or damage to the exam packets / parcels are to be reported to the awarding body immediately.

In the event that the Exams Officer, or designated member of SLT, is not immediately available to receive the parcels, the parcels will be refused and Parcel Force will re-arrange a suitable delivery time.



## **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 staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements at least a week in advance.

Only the Head of Centre, Exams Officer or a Senior Member of Centre Staff (Such as an Assistant Headteacher), approved by the head of centre and who have not had overall responsibility for the candidates preparation for the examinations (e.g. a subject lead) may be present at the start of the examination(s).

The senior members of the centre must only confirm the identification of candidates, deal with any disciplinary matters, check that the correct papers have been issued, check that the appropriate equipment has been issued and start the exam.

Only in practical examinations are subject staff allowed in the examination room and then only to issue instructions to candidates and maintain the discipline in the examination room.

Further information about this process can be found in the JCQ publication *Notice to Centres: The people present in the examination room*.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session.

The exam papers are to remain in the examination room for the full duration of the exam as published by the awarding bodies.

Invigilators have overall responsibility of the examination papers when they collect the papers from the Exam Office secure storage through to when they return the papers at the end of the exam.

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies. All examination scripts will be stored in the Exams Office secure storage facility until a representative from Parcelforce comes to collect them. The scheduled window for collection each day is between 14:00 and 16:00. If papers are not collected within this timeframe they are kept in the secure storage facility until the next collection window.



## **Candidates**

The Exams Officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the Exams Officer and Assistant Headteacher.

All candidates will receive copies of the JCQ publication *Information for candidates: For Written Exams – Sept 2019; Using Social Media and Examinations / assessments; On-screen tests; Non-examination assessments; Coursework; and Privacy Notice*. These will also be available on the school's website for downloading at home.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress / uniform and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room, candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. Any stationary that is brought into the examination room must be kept in a clear and see through bag / pencil case.

Students will not be allowed to take into the examination room any of the following items:

- Notes
- iPods, mobile phones, smart phones, MP3/4 players, Smartwatches / Fitbits.

Wrist watches, bracelets and hair bands / scrunchies should be placed on the desk at the start of the exam.

Failure to adhere to these conditions may lead to disqualification.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time.

Water is allowed into the Examination rooms but must be placed in a clear vessel with all labels removed. Food is not allowed into the Examination room unless it is for medical reasons and has been pre-approved but the Exams Officer, SLT and Centre medical staff.

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

Candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an invigilator at all times.

The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.



## ***Clash Candidates***

The Exams Officer will be responsible for sorting out arrangements where candidates have been identified as having an exam clash. This will include a re-arranged timetable for the student, suitable re-location of the student to sit their exam, suitable invigilation / escorts provided and, if necessary, arranging overnight accommodation and supervision.

All candidates where an exam clash has been identified will be notified and consulted with before arrangements are finalised.

## ***Special Consideration & Illness during the exams***

Should a candidate suffer from major illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate is still expected to attend their exams and should make every effort possible to attend, regardless of illness, on the days published unless in extreme conditions and permission has been given by the Head of Centre not to attend.

Those candidates that are suffering from illness and attend their exams will be accommodated separately from the main cohort to avoid further spreading of the illness.

Special consideration will only be considered if the candidate supports special consideration claims with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam.

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

## ***Non-Examination Assessment***

It is the duty of the Directors of Learning / Curriculum Leaders to ensure that all Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all NEA are provided to the Exams office by the Directors of Learning / Curriculum Leaders. The Exams Officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against NEA must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document. For further information please see **Section 3** of this policy handbook.



## **Results**

Results day is always in August of each year. Neither candidates nor Centre Staff will be able to access results before the date provided by JCQ / Awarding Bodies. An exception to this rule is BTEC qualifications where results are processed immediately after claiming the certificates.

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days,

- in person at the centre, sign and collect
- posted to their home address

The results slip will be in the form of a centre-produced document.

Results can be collected by a third party providing that the candidate has confirmed in writing to the Exams Officer that they give their permission for the named person to do so. The third party named person must provide identification to the Exams Officer when they arrive at the centre to collect the results.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Headteacher and Leadership Team.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Headteacher, Leadership team and Exams Officer.

## **Complaints**

The Exams Office adheres to the School's Complaints Procedure. Candidates and parents can find a full description of the School Complaints Procedure on the school website and also in **Section 5** of this Examination Policy handbook.



## ***Enquiries about Results (EAR)***

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Headteacher and Leadership Team.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the centre will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer, following the JCQ guidance.

Further information can be found in **Section 1e** of this Examinations Policy Handbook.

## ***Access to Scripts (ATS)***

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam 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.

Re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of obtaining scripts will be paid by the centre.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of Exams Officer.





## **Certificates**

Candidates will receive their certificates

- in person at the centre
- collected and signed for

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

If a candidate is collecting their certificates after the Centre's presentation evening, they will need to collect the certificates from the school and sign for them. No certificates are posted, unless written permission is given from the candidate.

The centre retains certificates for two years after which the certificates will be destroyed in accordance with JCQ regulations.

Candidates are still able to obtain their certificates after the two year period has lapsed. Candidates will need to apply direct to the relevant awarding body that retains their certificates and pay a processing fee (direct to the awarding body).

Head of Centre

Mr Alaric Govan

Exams Officer

Mrs Nicki Fry

Date

03/12/19