

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

1. RELATION TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Specific Awarding Body requirements and guidelines
- External Appeals Policy
- Internal Appeals Policy
- Staff Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

2. AIM

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

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

Brine Leas School is committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity in everything that it does and to ensuring that differences between all of our learners and staff are valued and respected.

3. EXAM RESPONSIBILITIES

• Headteacher

Overall responsibility for the school as an Exam Centre. Delegated responsibilities to Examinations officer to:

- Advise on appeals and re-marks.
- Report all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

• Exams Officer

Manage the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- Advise the School Leadership Team, Curriculum Leaders, Subject Teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various Awarding Organisations.
- Contribute to the production and distribution to staff, and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicate regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensure that candidates are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- Consult with Teaching Staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries.

- Receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
 - Administer access arrangements and make 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*.
 - Identify and manage exam timetable clashes.
 - Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
 - Line manage the invigilation team; their recruitment and training. Monitor the whole invigilation team responsible for the conduct of exams.
 - Submit candidates' coursework marks, track despatch and store returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding organisations correctly and on schedule.
 - Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forward appeals/re-mark requests.
 - Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams together with the recording of any achievement.
 - Implement this policy in accordance with all other school policies, procedures and regulations on Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, Quality Assurance, financial matters and Data Protection Act.
- **Curriculum Managers**
 - Ensure that course and exam information is correctly set up.
 - Provide guidance and pastoral oversight to candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
 - Comply with Awarding Organisation and specification requirements.
 - Provide direction to candidates on post-results procedures.
 - Accurately complete all exams documentation/coursework marksheets/declaration sheets and adhere to deadlines.
 - Inform the Exams Office of changes to course/entry/levels.
- **Personal Tutors/Student Services**
 - Provide guidance and careers information.
- **Course/Subject Tutors**
 - Provide details of additions or removals from candidate lists.
 - Return completed Exams documentation to the Exams Office in order to meet the internal deadlines to avoid Awarding Organisation penalty fees.
- **Learning Support Manager**
 - Oversee identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
 - Liaise with Exams Office to organise exam access arrangements.
 - Provide additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to assist candidates in achieving their course aims.
- **Lead Invigilator/Invigilators**
 - Check the examination room prior to the arrival of candidates to ensure that:
 - Heating, lighting, ventilation and levels of extraneous noise are acceptable.
 - No display materials that might be helpful to candidates are visible.
 - A reliable clock of readable size is visible to each candidate.
 - Ensure notices are displayed in accordance with JCQ regulations.
 - The seating arrangements prevent candidates, intentionally or otherwise, from overseeing the work of others.

- Be fully aware of the regulations according to “The Instructions for Conducting Examinations”.
 - Ensure that a signed record is kept of the seating and invigilation arrangements for any examination session that they participate in.
 - Carry out checks on the identity of candidates on their arrival.
 - Take all reasonable steps to ensure that:
 - The official examination stationery is issued to candidates and that no other stationery, including paper for rough work, is provided.
 - Candidates take into the examination room only those articles, instruments or materials which are expressly permitted.
 - Candidates have all the necessary material provided by the Awarding Organisation to enable them to complete the examination.
 - Open the packet of examination papers in the examination room and issue the papers to candidates.
 - Give clear instructions to candidates about the conduct of the examination to ensure that they fully understand what they are required to do.
 - Supervise the candidates throughout the whole time the examination is in progress, and give complete attention at all times to this duty.
 - Complete the Attendance Register during the examination and inform the Exams Office of any absentees.
 - Know the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency such as an emergency evacuation.
 - At the end of the examination, to collate all scripts in candidate number order and ensure that they are handed to the correct person.
 - Collect all unused stationery in the examination room and return it to the Exams Office.
 - Ensure that the room is left in a tidy condition.
 - Work to promote and apply the school’s safeguarding policy and procedures.
- **Candidates**
 - Check personal exam entries on receipt of timetable by email and inform the Exams Office of any discrepancies.
 - Understand coursework regulations and sign the relevant declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
 - Take responsibility for compliance with Awarding Organisation and JCQ regulations with respect to coursework, controlled assessment, written examinations, and online tests.
 - Pay for any re-sits in the specified period.
 - Attend all timetabled assessments.

4. THE QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED

The qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the School Leadership Team.

The subjects offered in any academic year may be found in the Centre’s published prospectus for that year and on the School website. If there has been a change of syllabus/specification from the previous year course information must be changed with Student Records and the Exams Office must be informed by the 1st October for all qualifications.

5. EXAM SEASONS, TIMETABLES AND CLASHES

5.1 Exam Seasons

- Curriculum Leaders have responsibility for giving the Exams Office the appropriate notice period for scheduling of internal exams which contribute to summative assessment.
- External exams are scheduled throughout the academic year and on demand with the appropriate notice adhered to. Curriculum Managers must liaise with Curriculum Leaders/Exams Office to oversee and plan the scheduling of exams for their area. This includes decisions on exams series.
- All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

5.2 Timetables

The Exams Office will display timetables of all external exams on their notice boards. The Exams Office will add room details. Allocation of Invigilators will be the responsibility of the Exams Office.

6. ENTRIES, ENTRY DETAILS, LATE ENTRIES AND RE-SITS

6.1 Entries

Normally candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Curriculum Leaders and Subject Co-ordinators. However, a candidate has the right to request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal but there would be an expectation that this would be following a discussion with their Subject Teacher.

6.2 Entry Details

All individual candidate statements of entry will be posted to the candidates' address on record.

The Exams Office will accept withdrawals, amendments and changes of tier up to the dates set by the Awarding Organisations. These deadlines are available from the Exams Office or the Awarding Organisation websites.

6.3 Late Entries

- Late entries are authorised by the Curriculum Leaders/Curriculum Managers and candidates.
- The deadlines for late entries are available from the Exams Office or the Awarding Organisation websites.
- Under extreme circumstances very late entries will be accepted but these will be subject to a fee levied by the Awarding Organisation.

6.4 Re-sits

Re-sit decisions are made in consultation with the Course Tutor, Exams Office and the candidate.

7. EXAM FEES

Normal registration and exam fees for the first sitting are paid by the Centre for fully funded candidates with an active enrolment.

Reimbursement of fees will be sought from candidates who do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or proof of other mitigating circumstances.

The Exams Office will charge a non-attendance fee of the component cost for any timetabled exam or assessment missed without supporting evidence.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by whoever is responsible for the need to make the change.

Re-sit fees are paid by the candidates. This also applies to candidates re-sitting a year already taken and taking units that they sat previously.

8. THE DISABILITY AND EQUALITY ACT, SPECIAL NEEDS AND ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 Disability and Equality Act

The Disability and Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA to general qualifications. All Exam Centre staff must ensure that access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

8.2 Special Needs

The Learning Support department will inform Subject Tutors of candidates with special educational needs. The Manager can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

8.3 Access Arrangements

- Candidates who may require access arrangements are identified during the admissions process or enrolment.
- Course Tutors/Personal Tutors identifying candidates who may require access arrangements after the start of the course should contact the Learning Support Manager at the earliest opportunity. It is the Course Tutor's responsibility to ensure arrangements are made as soon as possible after the start of the course.
- Applying for access arrangements via the JCQ AAO tool is the responsibility of the Exams Office.

9. ESTIMATED GRADES

Estimated grade forms are to be completed and returned via the Curriculum Leaders to the Exams Office in order to meet the Awarding Organisations' published deadlines.

10. MANAGING INVIGILATORS AND EXAM DAYS

10.1 Managing Invigilators

- External Invigilators will be used for all exams apart from some internally assessed components/controlled assessment.
- The recruitment of Invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Office.
- Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) clearance for new Invigilators is the responsibility of the Human Resources office.
- CRB fees for securing such clearance are paid by the school.
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Office.
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the school.

10.2 Exam Days

- The Exams Office or designated Rooms/Timetetable staff will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users.
- The Facilities Team are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms. The Exams Officer/lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Subject staff may be present outside the venue prior to the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted and must not enter the venue before the examination begins.
- In practical exams Subject Tutors may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- Exam papers must not be read by Subject Tutors or removed from the exam room. Papers will be distributed to Curriculum Leaders the following day.

11. CANDIDATES, CLASH CANDIDATES AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

11.1 Candidates

- JCQ rules on candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.
- Normal Centre rules on dress and behaviour apply. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the Centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until the published finishing time.
- The Exams Office staff will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Students are personally responsible for providing their own equipment for their exams. The Exams Office provide a minimal amount of 'spare' equipment in each venue but this will only be available to students who have a problem with their own equipment (e.g. breakages during the exam).

11.2 Clash Candidates

The supervision of candidates between exams is the responsibility of the Exams Office. In cases of overnight supervision candidates need to complete the appropriate documentation in accordance with JCQ regulations.

11.3 Special Consideration

- Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the school, Exams Office or the Exam Invigilator, to that effect.
- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within seven days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.
- If the school supports the application the Exams Office will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant Awarding Organisation within the JCQ's recommended deadlines.

12. COURSEWORK AND APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

12.1 Coursework

- Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the required date.

- The Curriculum Leaders/Managers will ensure all coursework is marked/internally verified in line with Awarding Organisation requirements. Curriculum Managers have the responsibility to ensure that appropriate quality assurance procedures are followed to include internal verification of assessed work. Curriculum Leaders will ensure that all internal verification is completed by school internal deadlines. The
- Exams Office will ensure that the work is despatched at the correct time and that a record of what has been sent, when and to whom is maintained.
- Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Exams Office by the Curriculum Leaders. These should be received by the Exams Office in order to meet the internal Exams Office Deadline.

12.2 Appeals Against Internal Assessments

- The Centre is obliged to publish a separate policy on this subject, which is available from the Exams Office and on the website.
- The main points are:
 - Appeals can only be made in relation to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the assessment decision i.e. the mark or grade awarded.
 - Candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification.
 - In the first instance the student should raise any concerns about the assessment process with the teacher.
 - If the student remains concerned having spoken to their teacher they should contact their Personal Tutor or a nominated person
 - The tutor or nominated person will ask the student to make a written appeal which will be submitted to the relevant school Manager. The grounds for the appeal must be clearly stated.
 - The findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Head of Centre and recorded for Awarding Organisation inspection.

13. **RESULTS, ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS (EARS) AND ACCESS TO SCRIPTS (ATS)**

13.1 Results

All individual candidate statements of results for General Qualifications received during the course will be emailed to the students' College email accounts and collected in person from the Exams Office if requested.

13.2 Enquiries about Results

EARs for General Qualifications may be requested by Centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The Awarding Organisation's fee is payable by either the candidate or the curriculum area depending on who has requested the EAR.

13.3 Access to Scripts (applicable to General Qualifications only)

- After the release of results of General Qualifications, candidates may request the return of papers within the Awarding Organisations' stated deadlines.
- Where an Awarding Organisation supplies the requested script electronically, the Exams Office will send the document to the candidate's school email account.

- If a result is queried, the Exams Office in conjunction with teaching staff or Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the curriculum areas' expense. Otherwise the candidate will pay for the remark themselves. If there is a change in unit grade the candidate will receive a refund from the Exams Office.
- Curriculum Leaders/Managers may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. (See also Section 5: Exam fees)

14. **CERTIFICATES**

Certificates must be collected and will only be posted in cases of a move out of the area.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised in writing to do so, and provide their own identification.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The Centre retains certificates for three years.

Prepared/Updated by: S Donald / C Corbett	Date: January 2016
Approved by Governors: February 2016 FGB	Review Date: January 2018