

Dawlish Federation of Special Schools

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EXAMS POLICY

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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.

This exam policy will be reviewed every two years.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the head of Centre, Exams Officer and the Governors.

1. Exam responsibilities

School Principal/Exams Officer

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam Centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the Principal is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

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Vice Principal (Education)/Exams Officer

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

- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors 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 teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- 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
- makes invigilators aware of the guidelines for administering exams.
- prepares and presents reports to the 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 dispatches 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
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Vice Principal (Education)

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- Organisation of staffing and administration of exams.

Subject Teachers

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer.
- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to heads of department/school/curriculum.

Careers Teacher

- Guidance and careers information.
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SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements.
- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- Provision of additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to help candidates achieve their course aims.

Vice Principal/Invigilators

- 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 their return to the exams office.

Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the head of Center and the heads of subject.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are NCTs, GCSE and Entry Level.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject or all NCTs will be taken in consultation with the candidates and the subject teachers.

At key stage 2

All candidates will take English, mathematics, science and ICT (from 2008). The school will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.

At key stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

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

Which exam series are used in the Center is decided by the Exams Officer and the heads of subject.

3.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams.

4. Entries, entry details and late entries

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of Centre and the subject teachers.

Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The Centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

4.2 Late entries

Late entries are authorised by the Exams Officer.

5. Exam fees

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

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by Centre.

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.

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements

6.1 DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam Centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

6.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

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.

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Vice Principal. invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Vice Principal with the Exams Officer.

7. Estimated grades

Estimated grades

Teachers will submit estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Exam days

The Exams Officer and the Vice Principal will equip all exam rooms after liaison with the Vice Principal and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

The Exams Officer and Vice Principal are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms. The invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to heads of department at the end of the exam session.

A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required.

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 Candidates

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

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

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

The Exams Officer 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.

9.2 Clash candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

9.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the Center, the Exams Officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the end of the course.

Heads of department will ensure all coursework is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The Centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office.

The main points are:

- appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against 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
- appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the head of Centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the Exam Officer's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

11. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the Center or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae).

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Principal.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

11.2 EARs

EARs may be requested by Center staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Vice Principal will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the Center's expense.

When the Center does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

11.3 ATS

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

Center 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.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person, posted (recorded delivery) or collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Replacement certificates are only issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The Center retains certificates for six years.

This Policy has been reviewed and adopted by the Governing Board



Signed Ms. M. Bruton