



EXAMINATIONS POLICY AT HANLEY CASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

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, according to JCQ and awarding body regulations
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.
- to ensure that students understand the exam 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. It is communicated to staff via the shared OneDrive.

Procedures and policies for the exam contingency plan, Non-examination Assessment (NEA) and BTEC qualifications are covered in the respective additional policies.

1. Exam responsibilities

- 1.1. The **Head of Centre (Headteacher)** has overall responsibility of the school as an exam centre. This responsibility includes responding to the National Centre Number (NCN) Annual update in October each year, ensuring the exams officer receives appropriate training and support, advising on reviews of marking. Ensures that confidentiality and security within the examination process is compliant and managed according to JCQ regulations, and takes reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of malpractice during exam periods.
- 1.2. SLT are familiar with and refer to the content the JCQ publications.
- 1.3. The **Exams Officer** manages all administration of public and internal exams, including the management of invigilators and the initial collation and distribution of exam results.
- 1.4. **Subject Leaders** are responsible for the guidance of subject teachers and candidates regarding examination entries, and for the accurate completion of exam entries, coursework / NEA mark submissions and



declaration sheets within deadlines as set by the Exams Officer. They are also responsible for the correct delivery of the course specification.

- 1.5. **Teaching Staff** are responsible for reading the updated JCQ publications which are sent out annually and required to meet internal exam deadlines set by the exams officer.
- 1.6. The **SENCO** is familiar with the contents, refers to JCQ Publications in particular Access Arrangements. Is responsible for arranging the assessment of those candidates that are eligible for access arrangements, and for making applications to JCQ for access arrangements. *See section 8 – Access Arrangements*
- 1.7. **Invigilators** are responsible for assisting the Exams Officer in the efficient running of exams in accordance with JCQ Regulations. Attending training updates and review sessions.

2. Candidates are responsible for:

- 2.1. Confirmation of entries and to notify the exams officer of any discrepancies.
- 2.2. Understanding NEA regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own. Familiarising themselves with the examinations booklet which is issued.
- 2.3. Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ Regulations.

3. Qualifications offered and entitlement for entry

- 3.1. Any statutory tests required will be overseen by the Exams Officer.
- 3.2. The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Heads of Department and the Senior Leadership team.
- 3.3. The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found on the school website in the KS4 or Sixth Form options process for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the relevant Head of Department must inform the exams office as early as possible and before 30 September of the academic year in which the course begins.
- 3.4. Normally, all **Key Stage 4** candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body in their compulsory and chosen courses. Exceptions to this are detailed in 3.6 below.



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- 3.5. **Post-16 students** will not be entered for AS qualifications within Year 12.
 - 3.6. **Withdrawals from qualifications.** We do not withdraw students from post-16 courses unless there are extreme circumstances. Withdrawals from GCSE qualifications may be made as a result of students not meeting the requirements of the course, e.g. as a result of unacceptable attendance or failure to submit essential assessed pieces of work. This may only be requested by the Subject Leader and must be authorised by the Key Stage Leader, who will consult with parents. Withdrawals may also be made following a student or parental request to the Key Stage Leader. However, if the student has met the course requirements they should normally be entered for the qualification, although the school retains discretionary rights involving all exam entries.
 - 3.7. **Students excluded from school:** Students who are serving a fixed-term exclusion from school will be allowed to take public examinations in school during the term of their exclusion. Normally, students who have been permanently excluded from school will not take their examinations at the school.

4. Exam seasons and timetables

- 4.1. External exam seasons are scheduled in May/June for Year 11 GCSE and A-level exams, and in November for GCSE resits in Mathematics and English. BTEC external assessment is scheduled in line with opportunities outlined in the subject specifications.
- 4.2. Wherever possible, internal Key Stage 4 and 5 exams are held under the same conditions as external exams, but internal exams and external exams cannot be held simultaneously in the same exam space.
- 4.3. The Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and Key Stages 4 and 5 internal exams once these are confirmed. These will be posted on the Exams board outside the Exams Officer's office, and on the school website. Exams officer will inform students of any contingency days

5. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

- 5.1. Exams officer requests entry information from subject leaders to ensure awarding body deadlines for submission are met and submits early entry information and creates entry marksheets. Candidates are entered for examinations by the subject leaders and course teachers. Where there is more than one opportunity to be entered for an exam (i.e. BTEC external



assessment) then the nature of the course and the candidate's readiness to achieve their full potential will be considered.

- 5.2. A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of tier or withdrawal by contacting the Exams Officer, who will liaise with the relevant Subject Leader. The school will consider these requests, but the final decision remains with the centre.
- 5.3. The centre may accept entries from external candidates by prior agreement with the Exams Officer. These will be limited to students who have been former students at the school and staff.
- 5.4. Entry deadlines are circulated to subject leaders and to candidates. All late entries requested by the school are required to be authorised by the Head of Centre.
- 5.5. If a department requests entries, including retakes, for a number of candidates then it is the department that takes responsibility for preparing and entering candidates for the exam. If an individual candidate requests an entry, including a retake, then the responsibility rests with the candidate.
- 5.6. It is good practice for decisions about retaking exams to be made by candidates following consultation with their subject teacher.

6. Exam Fees

- 6.1. Where a candidate is prepared for a qualification by the school the initial registration for that qualification is paid by the school.
- 6.2. Where a candidate is entered for and prepared for an exam or module by the school then the fee for the first entry for that examination or module is paid by the school.
- 6.3. Should the school enter and prepare a candidate for a retake of the same examination or module then the retake exam entry fee is paid by the school.
- 6.4. Should an individual candidate request a retake due to underachievement out of the school's control then the retake exam entry fee is paid by the candidate.
- 6.5. If a post-16 candidate resits their English or Mathematics GCSE as a result of not previously achieving at least a grade 4, the school is responsible for the exam entry and paying the fee so long as the school feels that the student is ready for the exam [including a good attendance record in 'resit' lessons]. If the candidate insists that they sit the exam



against the advice of the school then the candidate is responsible for the fee, but this fee will be refunded if they achieve a grade 4+. This is also the case for students in our Sixth Form who had previously studied at a different school.

- 6.6. Late entry or late amendment fees are paid by either the department or the individual candidate, whoever has responsibility for the late entry or late amendment.
- 6.7. 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.
- 6.8. Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements.
- 6.9. Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not agree with the need for an enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry. [See 'Enquiries about results' below]

7. The Equality Act (2010)

- 7.1. All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation as defined by the Equality Act.
- 7.2. The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the SLT & SENCO.

8. Access Arrangements

- 8.1. Determination of a candidate's special needs requirements is co-ordinated 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 may be granted during the course and in the exam.
- 8.2. Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO and the exams officer.
- 8.3. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies via the JCQ AAO Central Admin Portal (CAP) is the responsibility of the SENCO. Ensures correct procedures are followed when assessing



candidates and keeping evidence for JCQ inspection purposes when requested.

8.4. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO with the exams officer.

8.5. Invigilation for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the exams officer. Additional support is organised by the SENCO.

9. Contingency Planning

9.1. Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of SLT, supported by the exams officer.

9.2. Contingency plans are available in the school policies section of the staff shared One Drive and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

10. Private Candidates

10.1. Managing external, transferred and private candidates is the responsibility of the exams officer.

11. Malpractice

11.1. The head of centre, ensures any cases of alleged, suspected or actual instances of malpractice (by centre staff, candidates or invigilators) are investigated and reported immediately to the awarding body immediately by completing the appropriate documentation.

12. Exams Days

12.1. The exams officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers and other exam materials available to the invigilator.

12.2. Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and will be advised of any requirements in advance.

12.3. The exams officer will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

12.4. Heads of key stage 4 and 5 will be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates and to chase any absent candidates.



Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

12.5. In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

13. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

13.1. The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series through their exams booklet.

13.2. The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times. These follow the JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations.

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

13.4. Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

13.5. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time. Candidates who leave the exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff. The JCQ procedures must be followed.

13.6. Heads of Key Stage are responsible for contacting candidates who are late or absent for their exams on exam day.

13.7. In the event of an exam clash the exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

13.8. Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect. It may be possible to apply for special consideration after the exam.

13.9. Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a self-certification form for sickness. A letter from the candidate's doctor/hospital may be required in some instances. If accepted by the centre, the exams officer will then complete an online application for special consideration to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

13.10. Staff with children in the school who will be taking exams must inform the Exams Officer if they are teaching or assessing them. Staff in the exams office must also declare if they have children taking exams.



14. NEA and appeals against centre assessed marks

- 14.1. Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.
- 14.2. Marks for all internally assessed work are entered online through the AB secure portal by the heads of department. Students must be informed of their centre assessed mark in accordance with the internal appeals policy. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Appeals against Assessment Procedure.
- 14.3. Heads of department will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch by the exams officer at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom as well as when it is returned to the centre.
- 14.4. All coursework and NEA is managed and stored in line with the JCQ requirements (see NEA Policy).

15. Results, reviews of results (RORs) and access to scripts (ATS)

- 15.1. Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre / by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide a stamped, addressed envelope).
- 15.2. Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre. The Head of Centre will ensure that the appropriate staff are available on results days.
- 15.3. Timescales and procedures for RORs and ATS will be published by the Exams Officer on the Exams Notice Board and on the school website, as well as given to students. Post-16 students and Subject Leaders / Heads of Faculties will also be informed directly.
- 15.4. RORs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
- 15.5. Should an ROR be requested by a student or parent, this request must be made in writing and accompanied by payment and a signed consent form. The request must be formally recorded by the Exams Officer, who must ensure that the request is actioned.
- 15.6. Candidates may request a copy of their script after the issue of results. The request must be made in writing to the Exams Officer and accompanied by payment. The Exams Officer will formally record and action the request.



- 15.7. If a result is queried by staff, the exams officer, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense. Candidates may also ask for and pay for a review of marking. Before a review is considered, candidates will be advised that marks and therefore grades may go up or down as a result of the review. A refund is made by the board only if the overall subject grade changes as a result of a review.
- 15.8. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.
- 15.9. Reviews of marking cannot be applied for once an original script has been requested. However, a priority photocopy of the script may be requested prior to requesting a review of marking for A Level only.

16. Certificates

- 16.1. Certificates are to be collected in person and signed for.
- 16.2. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so in writing.
- 16.3. Whilst JCQ regulations state that unclaimed certificates may be destroyed after 12 months, at Hanley Castle we retain certificates securely for 5 years, after which time they will be destroyed.
- 16.4. Candidates wishing to obtain certificates after the five year retention period may obtain replacements (for a fee) by contacting the relevant exam boards directly. This is the candidate's responsibility.

17. Related policies

- Non-examination Assessment Policy and Risk Assessment
- Appeals Procedure
- Appeals against assessment policy
- Disability policy
- Exams archiving procedure
- BTEC Policies and Procedures