



William Brookes Academy Trust

Examinations Policy

Updated January 2016



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William Brookes Academy Trust
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This policy is due for review in 3 years

Introduction

Public examinations provide vital summative assessment, generally at the end of a key stage. This assessment gives information to students, parents, other education institutions, local authority and government agencies and employers about knowledge, understanding and skills achieved. To this end the William Brookes School participates willingly in the administration of these examinations in the best interests of the students and the school. In addition other internally set and marked examinations may take place at other stages in a student's progress through the school in order to both prepare for public examinations and check student learning.

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

1. Exam Responsibilities

1.1 Head of Centre:

Has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- to advise on appeals and re-marks
- to report all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*
- Organisation of teaching and learning
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

1.2 Exams Officer (and Assistant):

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 Controlled Assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- 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

- organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- submits candidates' Controlled Assessment marks, tracks despatch and distributes returned work 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.

1.3 Heads of Department:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- Completion of any Controlled Assessment tasks according to JCQ and Examination Board requirements
- Accurate completion of Controlled Assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets adhering to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

1.4 Head of careers

- Guidance and careers information.

1.5 Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Submission of candidate names to heads of department / faculty.

1.6 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.

1.7 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
- Return all exam equipment to the exams office after the exam.

1.8 Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of Statement of Entry sheet: GCE candidates may sign their own copy; GCSE candidates are required to ask parents/carers to sign.
- Understanding Controlled Assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own.

2. The Statutory Tests and Qualifications Offered

- The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Senior Leadership Team.
- The statutory tests and qualifications offered are Entry Level GCSE, BTEC, OCR Cambridge Nationals, GCSE and GCE.
- 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 by 30th September.
- At key stage 3 - Teacher assessment level judgements will be submitted for English, Mathematics and Science and ICT for all students at the end of Year 9.
- 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

- Internal Mock exams will be held in February/March of each year.
- External exams will be scheduled in May/June of each academic year.

3.2 Timetables

The Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams once these are confirmed.

4. Entries, Entry Details, Late Entries and Retakes

4.1 Entries

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by subject teachers and heads of department.

4.2 Late Entries

- Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via internal memos sent by the exams officer. Late entries are authorised by the exams officer.

4.3 Retakes

- Retake decisions will be made in consultation with students, parents and heads of department and with regard to current Government Education Policy (See also section 5: Exam fees)

5. Exam Fees

- All initial registration and entry exam fees for GCSE, BTEC, OCR Cambridge Nationals, AS and A2 are paid by the centre. Late entry or amendment fees are paid by departments.
- Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier where applicable, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes, provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.
- Retake fees for any AS and A2 retakes are to be paid by the candidate. GCSE retake fees may be paid by the Centre providing the candidates follow a "retake course", or at the discretion of the Head of Department. (See also section 4.3: Retakes).
- Candidates are liable for Access to Script fees, unless the script is requested by the Department.
- If the Centre does not uphold an Enquiry about Results but the candidate insists on pursuing the enquiry, the candidate must pay the fee. (See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs]).

6. The Disability and Equality Act 2010, Special Needs and Access Arrangements

6.1 Disability and Equality Act 2010

- All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the Disability and Equality Act 2010.

6.2 Special Needs

- A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the Learning Support Department.
- 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.

6.3 Access Arrangements

- Making special arrangements, including rooming, for candidates to take exams is the combined responsibility of the exams team and the Learning Support Department. Submitting access arrangement applications online is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Learning Support Department with the exams team.
- Candidates should be made aware of the practical implications of their Access Arrangement by the Learning Support team.

Type of Disability or Disadvantage	Centre Solution
Wheelchair user	The main exam rooms are on the ground floor, but should a candidate need access to upper floors we have a lift. There are also Evac chairs should we need to evacuate a wheelchair user from the upper floors. Candidates can also be accommodated in Meeting Room 1 on the ground floor.
Use of crutches for broken leg or other lower limb complaint	The main exam rooms are on the ground floor, but should a candidate need access to upper floors we have a lift. There are also Evac chairs should we need to evacuate a candidate from the upper floors. Candidates can also be accommodated in Meeting Room 1 on the ground floor.
Broken arm / collar bone / finger or other such complaint	The Centre will arrange for candidates to have a Scribe, laptop and/or extra time for the exam.
Generally feeling unwell	The Centre may be able to arrange for the candidate to sit the exam in a room on their own (invigilation staff permitting) and candidates will be allowed rest breaks of up to 10 minutes at a time without penalty to the overall exam duration.
Visual disability	All exam rooms in the Centre are well lighted. Candidates are permitted the use of their coloured film overlays as required.
Hearing disability	Candidates may have the use of a live speaker for pre-recorded exam components, or a sign language interpreter. Candidates will be accommodated in a room on their own.
Long term illness or disability	Candidates with long term illness or a disability that makes travel to the Centre difficult may be allowed to sit their exams at home with permission from the individual Exam Boards.
Learning disabilities	Candidates within the Centre are assessed and permitted the use of a Scribe, Reader and/or Extra Time as recommended by the Centre's SENCo.

7. Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

7.1 Managing Invigilators

- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Director of School Business (Mike Bainbridge) and the Exams Officer.
- Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators, and the updating of clearance for existing invigilators, is the responsibility of the Director of School Business.
- DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid when authorised by the Director of School Business.
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer and the Exams Assistant.
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Governing Body in accordance with Local Authority recommended pay scales.
- Invigilators will be provided with regular training organised by the Exams Officer.

7.2 Exam Days

- The exams team will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationary and materials available for the invigilator.
- The Campus Team is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, once official notification has been given by a member of the Exams Office Team.
- The Exams Officer or a designated lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Only Heads of Department may be present at the start of the exam at the invitation of the Exams Officer, to assist with identification of candidates. They are not permitted to advise on which questions are to be attempted or look at the examination paper.
- In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- Exam papers must not be removed from the exam room by any member of staff before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to heads of department at the end of the exam session.

8. Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration

8.1 Candidates

- The centre'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 centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

8.2 Clash Candidates

- The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

8.3 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, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.
- Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence to be received by the Exams Officer within five days of the exam: for example a letter from the candidate's doctor or parent/carer.
- The exams officer will then complete the on-line special consideration form for the relevant exam board within the Awarding Body deadline.

9. Controlled Assessment and Appeals against internal assessments

9.1 Controlled Assessment

- Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.
- Heads of department will ensure all Controlled Assessment work and accompanying signed declaration forms are ready for despatch at the correct time and the exams office will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.
- Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the centre deadline, usually 1 week before the Examination Boards' deadline.

9.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office (see appendix 1).

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 Controlled Assessment 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 exams officer who will decide, with other senior staff, whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the exams officer's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the head of centre and recorded for awarding body inspection.

10. Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

For EAR Notice for Candidates – see Appendix 2

10.1 Results

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days. Candidates are notified about details of collection times prior to the exam period.
- Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Business Manager.
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Business Manager.

10.2 Access To Scripts (ATS)

- After the release of results, candidates may ask the exams officer or subject staff to request the return of papers by the JCQ published deadline. Details will have been issued to staff and candidates, each year, with the letter confirming arrangements for the collection of results in August.
- If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained prior to the request being sent to the exam board. Request and consent forms are available from the exams officer.
- Requests for photocopied GCSE scripts are unavailable. Therefore, GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

10.3 Enquiries About Results (EARs)

- EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
- Deadlines for EAR's and current fees will be displayed in the staffroom, on the exams notice board, and in the exams office.
- When the centre 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 (see section 5: Exam fees).

11. Certificates

- Certificates are collated for each student.
- Students still at school are encouraged to collect their certificates from the Exams Assistant (Miss. Brown). Students who have left may also collect their certificates from school. All students collecting from the Exams Office must sign and date a record of collection.
- All other certificates not collected in this way are sent by First Class Post with a Certificate of Posting.

12. Contingency Plan

- An Exams Contingency Plan will be added to this Policy once a whole School plan has been agreed by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors.