

# Examinations Policy 2020

## Monitoring

By	Review Period	Method
Senior Leadership Team	Annual	Meeting

Ownership: Examinations Officer

## Revision History

Review	Changes	Next Review Date
October 2016	Agreed with examination board process	October 2018
November 2018		
February 2020	Updated to align with current practices	



## **Centre Examinations Policy**

The purpose of this exams 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.

## **St Joseph's Vision and Values and how this policy support this**

Our College Vision statement states that:

“Our Catholic College seeks to be a community in which all are valued, where the life and the relationships of the College are permeated by Gospel values and in which the individual is seen as unique, with infinite potential for growth towards wholeness. The College, in active partnership with home, parish and the wider community, endeavours to prepare all its members for a future in which they will be able to make a positive contribution and take up the challenge of their faith.”

This policy supports the vision by ensuring that final assessments are run in accordance with correct exam board guidelines, so that each individual can be confident that their examination experience at the college will be valid and procedurally correct.

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 two years

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Examinations Manager

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

## **Exam responsibilities**

### **The Head of Centre:**

- Has overall responsibility for the school/college 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”.

## **Examinations Manager<sup>1</sup>:**

- Manages the administration of external exams and internal tests.
- Advises the senior leadership team, Subject and class tutors, 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.
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- Checks with teaching staff that the necessary non exam assessment are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 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.
- Makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication "A guide to the special consideration process". Access arrangements and their applications are delegated to and managed by the learning support department.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Provides information accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Ensures candidates' non-exam assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores returned non-exam assessment.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.

**Heads of Department** are responsible for:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Examinations Manager.
- Accurate completion of non-exam assessment/electronic mark submissions declaration sheets.
- Decisions on post-results procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the individual to whom the Head of Centre has delegated responsibility for the administration of exams in their centre.

**Teachers** are responsible for:

- Supplying information on entries, non-exam assessment as required by the Head of department and/or Examinations Manager.

The **special educational needs coordinator** is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the Examinations Manager in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- Process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- Working with the Examinations Manager to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

**Lead invigilator/invigilators** are responsible for:

- Assisting the Examinations Manager in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- 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.

**Candidates** are responsible for:

- Confirmation of entries being correct
- Understanding non-exam assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the non-exam assessment as their own.
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.
- Parents are responsible for paying for any re-marks and necessary paperwork not initiated by the College.

### **Qualifications offered**

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Heads of Department

The types of qualifications offered are at Level 1, and Level 2

The Subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by the start of the new curriculum year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Heads of Department.

Senior leader and SENCO, where appropriate will decide on whether or not a candidate will be entered for a particular subject with input from student's

teacher. This will be approved by the Senior leadership team. All decisions will be based on the best interests of the student and will have clear reasons and evidence to support the decision.

### **Exam series**

Internal exams (mock exams) and assessments are usually scheduled in January. External exams and assessments are scheduled in May/June.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The assistant principle/s decide when mock exams will be scheduled

The centre does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the head/s of department.

### **Exam timetables**

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

### **Entries, entry details and late entries**

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a Subject entry change of level or withdrawal

The centre accepts entries from private candidates.

The centre may act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department/curriculum via email or are accessible on the college intranet

Heads of Department will provide exam entry information to the Examinations detailing the exam board and entry code(s) for their subject.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing or by email from Heads of Department.

Re-sits/retakes are allowed where permitted by the subject specification.

### **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 Examinations Manager will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series.

First attempt exam entry fees will be paid by Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are to be paid by the department/individual who caused the fee to be imposed.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates:

- if they fail to sit an exam
- if they do not meet the necessary assessment requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances

Resit fees are paid by the candidates unless agreed by the Chief Finance and Operations officer.

### **Equality Legislation**

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

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.

### **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.

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 SENCo

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 SENCo

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the SENCo

### **Contingency planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Examinations Manager

Contingency plans are available on the College Network and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

### **Private candidates**

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Examinations Manager

### **Non-Exam Assessment Marks**

Heads of Subject are responsible for submitting marks to the exam boards through their secure websites.

### **Managing invigilators**

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations. These invigilators will be used for external exams only.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Manager and Personnel department

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Personnel department

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Personnel department

Invigilators are timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Examinations Manager

### **Malpractice**

The head of centre in consultation with Examinations Manager is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

### **Exam days**

The Examinations Manager 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 facilities staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements one month in advance.

The Chief invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be there in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

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

Only exam office staff and invigilators have the authority to remove an exam paper from an exam venue. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Subject in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 48 hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the Examinations Manager will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies.

## **Candidates**

The Examinations Manager will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the Assistant Principles

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress 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. This is particularly true of mobile phones, smart watches and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

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

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Examinations Manager is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

## **Clash candidates**

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

## **Special consideration**

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of 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 Examinations Manager to that effect.



The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 2 days of the exam.

The Examinations Manager will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the exam.

### **Internal assessment**

It is the duty of Heads of Subject to ensure that all assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Examinations Manager will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all non-exam assessment work entered directly on exam board secure website.

The Examinations Manager will inform staff of the date when appeals against non-exam assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

### **Results**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days, in person at the centre

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

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Examinations Manager

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Examinations Manager

### **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 but must be authorised by the Head of Centre.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the candidate. If an application is supported by Head of Department, the department will be charged.

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 Examinations Manager, following the JCQ guidance.

## Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask Subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 21 days of the receipt of results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the Exams Manager. The cost for this service will be for candidates of subject department to pay.

## Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates in person at the centre and must be signed for.

- The exams office will send out a collection authorisation letter to the candidates' postal address.
- This letter of authorisation must be produced by the candidate or their delegate on collection the candidates certificate

The centre retains certificates in line with the College retention period. If a certificate is lost by the candidate, the exams office will provide information to assist the candidate with obtaining official documents from Exam boards.

Head of centre

Examinations Manager

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Date.....

This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

Non exam assessment policy

Data protection policy

Information and retention policy

## Examinations Policy – Appendix 1

### Staff responsibilities

#### Outline of staff responsibilities - GCSE non-exam assessments

##### Senior leadership team

- Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of non-exam assessments. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.
- At the start of the academic year, begin coordinating with heads of department/subject to schedule non-exam assessments. (It is advisable that non-exam assessments are spread throughout the academic years of Key Stage 4.)
- Map overall resource management requirements for the academic year. As part of this resolve:
  - clashes/problems over the timing or operation of non-exam assessments;
  - issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.);
- Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events.
- Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for non-exam assessments.

##### Heads of department/faculty

- Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.
- Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.
- Ensure that individual teachers fully understand their responsibilities with regard to non-exam assessment.
- Ensure that individual teachers fully understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification, are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes **and** any other subject specific instructions.
- Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or adapt sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with the awarding body's specification and control requirements.

##### Teaching staff

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines detailed within the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting non-exam assessments*.
- Understand and comply with the awarding body's specification for conducting non-exam assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.

- Supply to the exams office details of all unit codes for non-exam assessments.
- Obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times.
- Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to candidates as the specification allows.
- Ensure that candidates and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark scheme provided by the awarding body. Submit marks to the awarding body by the published deadline, keeping a record of the marks awarded.
- Retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one).
- Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates' work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.
- Ask the appropriate special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

### **Exams office staff**

- Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD or hard copy format.
- **In exceptional circumstances** where non-exam assessments cannot be conducted in the classroom, arrange suitable accommodation where non-exam assessments can be carried out at the direction of the senior leadership team.

### **Special educational needs coordinator/additional learning support**

- Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.
- Work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

## **Appendix 2 – Risk Management**

## GCSE non-exam assessments

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
<b>Timetabling</b>			
Non-exam assessment schedule clashes with other activities	Plan/establish priorities well ahead (e.g. at the start of the academic year)	Plan dates in consultation with school calendar – negotiate with other parties	Head of Department
Too many controlled assessments close together across GCSE subjects	Plan non-exam assessments so they are spaced over the duration of the course	Space non-exam assessments to allow candidates some time between them	SLT i/c of KS4
<b>Accommodation</b>			
Insufficient space in classrooms for candidates	Once the size of the cohort is known at the start of the year, flag instances where regular classroom space may not be suitable to conduct non-exam assessments	Use more than one classroom or multiple sittings where necessary	Head of Department
Insufficient facilities for all candidates	Careful planning ahead and booking of rooms / centre facilities		Head of Department

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
<b>Downloading awarding body set tasks</b>			
IT system unavailable on day of assessment	Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date in all cases	Book IT equipment well ahead and download tasks before scheduled date of assessment	Head of Department
Teaching staff unable to access task details	Test secure access rights ahead of non-exam assessment schedule every year and every session	Ensure teaching staff have access rights for the correct area of awarding body secure extranet sites well ahead of the non-exam assessment schedule	Exams Officer
Loss of task details in transmission	Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date	Contact awarding body and ask for replacement task; download again	Head of Department
<b>Absent candidates</b>			
Candidates absent for all or part of assessment (various reasons)	Plan alternative session(s) for candidates		Head of Department

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
<b>Control levels for task taking</b>			
The assessment is undertaken under incorrect level of control (time, resources, supervision and collaboration)	Ensure teaching staff know what level is applicable and understand what is involved. Provide training if required	Seek guidance from the awarding body	Head of Department
<b>Supervision</b>			
Student study diary/plan not provided or completed*	Ensure teaching staff are aware of the need for study diary/plans to be completed early in course	Ensure candidates start, continue and complete study diary/plans that are signed after every session	Head of Department
Teaching staff do not understand that the supervision of non-exam assessments is their responsibility	Ensure teaching staff fully understand the nature of non-exam assessments and their role in supervising assessments		SLT i/c KS4 Head of Department
A suitable supervisor has not been arranged for an assessment where teaching staff are <b>not</b> supervising	A suitable supervisor must be arranged for any non-exam assessment session where a teacher is not supervising, in line with the awarding body's specification		Examinations Officer

\* Not all GCSE non-exam assessments will require the completion of a study diary or study plans

Example risks and issues	Possible remedial action		Staff
	Forward planning	Action	
<b>Task setting</b>			
Teaching staff fail to correctly set tasks	Ensure teaching staff fully understand the task setting arrangements as defined in the awarding body's specification**	Seek guidance from the awarding body	Head of Department
Assessments have not been moderated in line with the awarding body's specification	Check specification and plan required moderation appropriately	Seek guidance from the awarding body	Head of Department
<b>Security of materials</b>			
Assessment tasks not kept secure before assessment	Ensure teaching staff fully understand the importance of task security	Contact the awarding body to request/obtain different assessment tasks	Head of Department
Candidates' work not kept secure during or after assessment	Define the appropriate level of security, in line with the awarding body's requirements, for each department as necessary	Seek guidance from the awarding body	Head of Department
Insufficient or insecure storage space	Look at provision for suitable storage at the start of the GCSE course	Find alternative storage within the centre	Examinations Officer

\*\* All tasks whether set by the awarding body or the centre **must** be developed in line with the requirements of the specification.



