

	Examination Policy
Person(s) Responsible:	
Approval:	Governing Body
Headteacher:	Gary Edmunds
Policy Originator:	Sean McGowran
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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 interests 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.

The exam policy will be reviewed every year.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Examinations Officer.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at 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*.

Exams officer¹:

- manages the administration of internal exams and external exams.
- 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/carers are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- 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.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publications for Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.

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

- line manages and is responsible for the training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework/controlled assessments.
- 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 exams officer.
- accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post-results procedures.

Teachers are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer.

The **special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)** is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the exams office.
- distribution of relevant materials/equipment during examinations.

Candidates are responsible for:

- confirmation and checking of entries.
- understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Senior Leadership Team with agreement of the Proprietor and, where appropriate, Governing Body.

The types of qualifications offered are General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSE), Functional Skills Maths, English and ICT , and a range of vocational qualifications which include BTEC and Prince's Trust programmes..

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of Department. This should be done in the Summer of the current academic year for the academic year following.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Head of Department in consultation with the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Exam series

External exams and assessments are scheduled in January, and May/June.

The teacher with subject leadership responsibility in agreement with the Headteacher decides which exam series are used in the centre.

Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables at a specified date before each series begins.

Entries, entry details and late entries

All pupils at the **end of Key Stage 4 or 5 or in their last year of study with our school** should be entered for an external assessment (in November, January, March or June) during the academic year. The Senior Leadership Team recognises that there may exist special circumstances in which pupils in the year groups outlined above may not be entered (for example, the pupil joins us late in the academic year). Pupil Progress Meetings involving Head Teacher and the SLT and Curriculum Leaders shall take place prior to examination entry windows and Subject leaders will be asked to provide justification for the non-entry of any relevant pupils and the strategies/interventions in place to support those working below target to close the gap.

Candidates or parents/carers can in agreement with the subject leaders or Senior Leadership Team request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does not accept entries from private candidates, unless they are ex-students who have left school within 1 year of the requested entry at the agreement of the Exams Officer.

The centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to subject leaders via email or Google Drive.

Subject leaders/curriculum will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Exam fees

The exams officer will publish the deadline for action well in advance for each exam series.

All entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre.

Re-sit fees are paid by the centre.

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 candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer under the advisement of the Senior Leadership Team.

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 in agreement with the Examination Officer.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCo.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Examinations Officer with the help of the Learning Support Team.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

Contingency plans are available via the school intranet and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Estimated grades

Subject leaders are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

Managing invigilators

Invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams. All members of staff have received invigilation training and are used to invigilate exams that are not related to their subject area.

Malpractice

The head of centre in consultation with the Exams Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam days

The exams officer 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 management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements at least 3 weeks in advance.

The Exams Officer or invigilator at the request of the Exams Officer 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 in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed and what they can do.

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

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 in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 24 hours after candidates have completed it.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with the Examinations and Data Administrator.

Candidates

The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the Senior Leadership Team.

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 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 at the discretion of the Examinations Officer.

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

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

Students arriving late to an examination within 1 hour of the JCQ Official start time will be allowed to sit the exam with the full time allowance. Any students arriving very late will be allowed to sit the examination at the discretion of the Exams Officer.

Clash candidates

The Examinations Officer 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 Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 6 days of the exam.

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

Internal assessment and appeals

It is the responsibility of the Heads of the Department to ensure that all internal assessments is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office a week before the Awarding Body deadline. The exams officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

The submission of any internal marks electronically will be double-checked by a second person within the Examinations team and a paper record of the final marks submitted will be kept for a period of 3 years.

Internal Quality Assurance and Verification

Rationale

Spring Hill High School adheres with the common principles for assessment and students are entitled to:

- Equity and consistency in assessment for all
- Assessment procedures will be endorsed by School Governors, and any awarding bodies.
- Indication of the generic assessment process which constitutes good practice on all courses.
- Access to assessment strategy and course details at all stages of their learning.

The requirements of any awarding bodies will be encompassed within the school's assessment strategy.

Quality Assurance Practitioner Criteria

All Assessors, Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers will be trained to an appropriate standard.

The Lead Verifier will be appointed by the Awarding Organisation.

Functions of the Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers

The Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers will be responsible for scrutinising the assessment practices and decisions of assessors in their team. It is the Internal Verifier's/Quality Assurer's responsibility to establish mechanisms to monitor the quality of assessment within course teams. The Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers will sample evidence to check that decisions have been made:

- against National Standards
- Consistently
- using valid evidence
- using sufficient evidence
- using authentic evidence
- using current evidence

The outcomes from the Internal Verifier/Quality Assurer's sampling activities will be:

- Written and/or oral feedback to assessors confirming decisions or suggesting action plans to ensure validity of assessment.
- Documentation of quality assurance activities, decisions and feedback for the team and external quality assurer.
- Collation of the results of the quality assurance activity.

- Plan of future sampling activities.

In fulfilling the role, the Lead Internal Verifier/Quality Assurer has a responsibility to support and develop the whole course team and ensure that assessment resources are appropriate and adequate.

Appeals Policy for Students

The school recognises that there may be circumstances when individual students or groups are unhappy with an assessment decision, or believes that a piece of work has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the standards required by the Awarding Body.

The policy aims to:

- reach agreement between the student and assessor at the earliest opportunity
- standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness
- facilitate a student's ultimate right of appeal to the Awarding Body
- protect the interests of all students and the integrity of the school and the qualification

Responsibilities

Students should inform their Assessor or examinations officer if they are not satisfied with an assessment. The Examinations Officer and/or Lead Verifier will offer support to students throughout the appeals procedure

The Examinations Officer will:

- Record, track and validate any student assessment appeal.
- Forward any appeals to the Awarding Body as appropriate.
- Keep appeals records for inspection by the Awarding Body for a minimum of 18 months.
- Will take appropriate action to protect the interests of students and the integrity of the school and the qualification
- Monitor appeals to inform quality improvements

Procedure

We encourage students to discuss any concerns with the Assessor in the first instance. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the appeals procedure outlined below. Details of any student appeal should only be discussed with others involved in the appeals process. The student's confidentiality must be respected at all times. Any enquiry, question or appeal should be made as soon as possible after the assessment decision. An appeal must be made within 10 working days after receiving the assessment results.

Stage 1 – Formal Re-Assessment

The student must discuss with Assessor why they feel that the work has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the standards and level required by the Awarding Body. The Assessor will carry out relevant investigations based on the nature of the appeal. There are two possible outcomes:

- The decision remains unchanged
- The decision is amended – this could be both up or down. The Assessor should document the decision with their reasons. The Assessor will advise the student of the decision no later than 5 working days after the appeal is made. The student should consider the Assessor's comments and decision and decide whether to accept the outcome of the formal re-assessment. The appeal form should be passed to the Examinations Officer for tracking and monitoring purposes. If the student has not accepted the reassessment decision, the Examinations Officer will facilitate a move to Stage 2 of the appeals procedure.

Stage 2 – Assessment Appeals Panel

If an assessment appeal remains unresolved at Stage 1 of the procedure, an Assessment Panel will review the appeal. The Quality Systems Manager will nominate suitable members of staff for the Assessment Panel including an experienced member of teaching staff to lead the investigation into the assessment appeal. This may be the Internal Verifier but the person must be independent to the previous stage of the investigation. The panel will consider the findings of the investigation and decide whether:

- The original assessment decision remains unchanged
- The assessment decision is amended – this could be both up or down

The Panel should document their decision and reasons. If appropriate, they should also record any further actions required as a result of the findings from the investigation. The outcome of the appeal will be reported back to the student and Assessor within 10 working days of the appeal being received at Stage 2.

Escalation to Awarding Body

If the student remains dissatisfied with the decision of the Assessment Panel, the Examinations Officer will help facilitate escalation to the relevant Awarding Body.

Results

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days,

- in person at the centre
- by post to their home address.
- by a nominated person as stated by the candidate on the correct form before the end of the summer term.

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 Exams Officer. Date, time and venue will be communicated to pupils, parents/carers and other key professionals via email in the Summer, and the school's Summer Newsletter. This information will also be shared via the school's Website.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team.

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.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the candidate unless agreed by the Subject leader for the cost to be covered by departmental budgets.

All decisions on whether to apply for an EAR will be made by the candidate following advice from the Exams Officer.

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 Exams Officer 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 30 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.

Re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of ATS will be paid by the candidate unless agreed by the Subject leader for the cost to be covered by departmental budgets.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates In person at the centre, a signature will be required.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre retains certificates for 1 year before they are destroyed.

The school is happy to provide pupils with a transcript of the results. However, The school will not be responsible for obtaining replacement certificates. Replacement certificates should be sought from the individual examination boards. The school will not cover any costs towards the issuing of certificates. The school is happy to support in providing information to support the request of a certificate(s).

Ratified by Governors:

Name: Barbara Scrivens

Role: Chair of Governors