



Exam Policy

Adopted by Governors:

(Date of Meeting)

Committee Link:

(Chair)

Review Timetable:

Renewal Date:

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The 11-16 exam policy

1.1 The policy purpose

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure all examination board regulations and requirements are followed by staff and students;
- 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, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Exams Officer (EO).

1.2 Exam responsibilities

Having overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre, the Head of Centre delegates to the EO the management of the administration of public and internal exams. The EO will also:

- advise the SLT, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies;
- oversee the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicate regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events;
- ensure that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them;
- consult with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework and/or controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines;
- provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries;
- receive, check and store all exam papers and completed scripts;
- administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration for the current academic year;
- identify and manage exam timetable clashes;
- account for income and expenditure relating to all exam costs/charges;
- manage the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams;
- provide access arrangements.

2. Qualifications

2.1 Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Heads of Department (HOD) and SLT.

The qualifications currently offered are Functional Skills, GCSE and FCSE, BTEC, NCFE certificates.

Informing the exams officer of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the HOD's and SLT.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/careers, Director of Inclusion (DoI), subject teachers, and head of subject.

3. Exam series and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams and assessments, including controlled assessments, are scheduled throughout the year. A timetable will be constructed in the summer term for the following academic year taking into account the requirements of all departments.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in November, January, March, May and June in 2012-2013 academic year. Thereafter, external exams will be scheduled only in November (maths) and May/June. The Head of Centre, HOD's and EO decide which exam series are used in the centre.

Some Year 10 and 11 internal exams are held under external exam conditions and some KS3 exams will be held in teaching rooms but under exam conditions.

3.2 Timetable

Once confirmed, the EO will circulate the exam and assessment timetable for internal exams, controlled assessments and external exams.

4. Entries, entry details and late entries

4.1 Entries, entry details and late entries

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

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

4.2 The Exams Officer:

- submits candidates' controlled assessment marks; tracks dispatches and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule;
- prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to targets and comparable data for previous years;
- 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.

4.3 Heads of Departments are responsible for:

- guidance of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries;
- involvement in post-results procedures;
- accurate completion of controlled assessment mark sheets, estimated grade sheets and centre declaration sheets;
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the EO;
- implementation of access arrangements for relevant students in controlled assessments;
- notification of potential access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course);
- submission of candidates' names.

4.4 The Director of Inclusion (DoI) is responsible for:

- 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.

4.5 Invigilators are responsible for:

- receipt and checking of exam papers and other material from the EO before the start of the exam;
- conducting exams according to JCQ regulations and any additional requirements as notified by the EO;
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the EO.

4.6 Candidates are responsible for:

- confirmation and signing of entries. Late amendment as a result of not confirming entries will incur a charge.
- understanding controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own;
- adhering to any JCQ regulations and any additional school requirements.

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

The centre does not act as an exam centre for other organizations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to HoDs via briefing meeting, internal memo and email.

Late entries are authorized by HoDs and the EO.

5. Exam Fees

All initial exam entry fees are paid by the Centre.

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedure or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

Fee reimbursements will be sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline or who fail to sit an exam/do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or other mitigating circumstances, unless the candidate is eligible for free school meals.

Late entry/amendment fees incurred arising from a departmental request will be charged to the department.

In the event of the school closing due to adverse weather conditions, candidates will be re-entered at the next available exam series at the school's expense.

6. Disability Discrimination Act

6.1 Disability Discrimination Act

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006.

The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provision of the Act gives protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

A person has a disability for the purpose of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The centre will meet the requirements of the DDA by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidates' experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, SLT, EO and DoI.

6.2 Access arrangements

The DoI 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 EO and/or DoI will then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course of the exam.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the DoI, Educational psychologist/Specialist teacher and EO.

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the DoI and the EO.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the EO with the DoI.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organized by the EO with the DoI.

6.3 Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the SLT.

7. Estimated Grades

The HoD is responsible for submitting estimated grades to the EO when requested by the EO.

8. Managing Invigilators

8.1 Managing Invigilators

External staff are used to invigilate Internal, KS4 Mock and External examinations.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

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

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the authority.

8.2 Malpractice

The EO is responsible for investigation of suspected malpractice.

8.3 Exam days

The EO 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 is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The nominated lead invigilators will start exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam only to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections 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 the session. Papers will be distributed to HoDs by the EO when all completed papers have been packed for posting.

9. Candidates

The JCQ Regulations and the centre's published rules on dress and behaviour apply at all times. For external exams, all personal belongings will be placed in the designated place outside the exam room.

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. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the EO or Lead Invigilator.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff or Invigilator at all times.

The EO is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently, according to JCQ guidelines. An attempt will be made to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam.

For clash candidates, the allocation of escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision if necessary is the responsibility of the EO.

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise be disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the EO 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 EO will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Unit exams, Maths Modules and Science Objective tests

For 2012-2013 academic year only, the HoD is responsible for deciding which series a test is to be taken in, taking into account the 40% final assessment rule where applicable.

Re-take of unit tests will only be allowed:

- when the original result is below the student's school target and the student can demonstrate willingness to prepare for the re-sit;
- when the department will allocate time to preparing the student for the re-sit and show plans to the SLT;
- where a parent is prepared to pay for the exam and the HoD agrees that the student will benefit from this;
- reimbursement of re-sit fees will be sought, in advance, from candidates for all subjects except Maths and English, because of the significance of these subjects to students' futures and school performance data. Fees for students eligible for free school meals will be paid by school.

11. Internal assessments and appeals

11.1 Internal assessment (controlled test/coursework)

Controlled assessments will take place according to the exams and assessment calendar, as agreed in the summer term for the following academic year.

In general, students will be allowed only one attempt at each controlled test because of the time demands of all unitized GCSEs.

A re-sit of a controlled test may be allowed if:

- the student's work is significantly below the standard expected of the student;
- there are mitigating circumstances;
- the student is willing to do the necessary work.

Only one re-sit attempt will be allowed.

It is the duty of HODs to ensure that all internal assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time.

11.2 Marks

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the EO by the HoDs.

11.3 Appeals against internal assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy, available from the exams office.

12. Results

12.1 Results, enquiries about results(EARS) and access to scripts(ATS)

Candidates will receive individual results sheets on results days either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide self addressed envelopes).

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Head of Centre and EO.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and EO.

12.2 EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidate's consent is required before EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the EO, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

When the centre does not support a candidate's or parent's request for 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.

Parents and candidates are offered the option to have a paper re-marked, where professional guidance suggests a higher grade may be possible. This is the parent's choice and at the parent's expense. Information about this option will be made available during exam results time, from August to September. Parents must be aware that results can go up and down. Professional consultation with staff is available should parents require this.

Payment for all EARs, except for Maths and English grade C/D borderline students, will be requested in advance from parents and reimbursed if grades are changed.

12.3 ATS

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

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

GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

13. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person or collected and signed for.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have written authorization to do so.

The centre retains certificates for one year. After this time they will be destroyed in accordance with exam board regulations.

ANNEX 1: Controlled Assessment

Controlled assessment is an integral and important part of the GCSE courses which students undertake in years 10 and 11. It constitutes varying proportions of the marks in different subjects and is vital for students to gain success in external examinations at the end of KS4.

Definitions

Controlled assessment is defined as work assigned to and completed by a student during a course of study. It makes up a proportion of the student's final grade at the end of the course. It is designed to measure skills that are not effectively assessed by external assessment.

External Dependencies

Controlled assessment forms an element of the assessment procedures of both the internal and external examination of students and as such is subject to regulation by the relevant examination body and JCQ.

Controlled Assessment Scheduling

It will not be possible to ensure that students are not undertaking more than one piece of controlled assessment at once and therefore students may be under considerable pressure at certain points during their courses with controlled assessment preparation and deadlines. Therefore the school will:

- ensure that a controlled assessment calendar is produced and published every year in order to provide a structured guide for students and parents/guardians as to when controlled assessment will be happening during the academic year;
- ensure that students are supported and appropriately paced throughout their controlled assessments (as far as is possible);
- provide catch up sessions for students who miss a controlled assessment session when initially scheduled.

The School's responsibilities are:

- ensure that all students have equal access to everything they need to complete their controlled assessments in a fair way, taking into account any agreed access arrangements;
- ensure that an effective communications strategy is in place to make sure that parents/guardians are fully informed about their child's preparation and progress in controlled assessments in line with the whole school policy on reporting;
- ensure that each academic department develops, maintains and implements its own internal assessment procedures in line with the whole school policy for assessment and recording internal assessment and these to be evidenced in ongoing department practice.

The subject department's responsibilities are:

- ensure that the assessment procedures as outlined in the department's policy, and in accordance with the exam board's policy, is implemented fully in practice;
- ensure that deadlines are clear, realistic, agreed and shared with the department teaching staff, other school staff with interest (Exams Officer, Head of Year, Teaching Assistants, etc), students and parents/guardians as appropriate;
- ensure that the procedures for controlled assessment taking are published and understood by department staff;
- ensure that all teacher feedback to students refers to published mark schemes and guidelines;
- keep up to date records of controlled assessment preparation and task taking;
- ensure that all staff in the department follow the same procedures.

Individual subject teacher's responsibilities

Each individual subject teacher is responsible, under the guidance of the Head of Department, for the implementation of external and internal assessment of classes allocated to them in the relevant academic year. Classroom teachers will be supported in all of these activities by the management structure of the school and specifically their Head of Department. Class teachers are therefore required to:

- understand the scheduling of controlled assessment in their department;
- ensure that students are fully aware of the implications of controlled assessment and the procedures for task marking, internal standardisation and external moderation;
- understand the application of task setting, task taking and task marking as relevant to the examination body of the course their classes are undertaking;
- ensure that students are fully aware of controlled assessment requirements by giving them the task requirements, course specification and marking criteria in advance of the task being taken.

Disciplinary procedures for academic misconduct

Academic misconduct can be defined as any attempt by a student to gain an unfair advantage in either internal or external assessments. Academic misconduct is widely recognised to be (but may not be limited to):

- copying: an imitation or reproduction of another student's work;
- plagiarism: the reproduction of another person's work, which may have been copied from a book or downloaded from the internet and not duly acknowledged;
- collusion: a secret agreement between students to gain advantage during controlled assessment;

- bribery/attempting to bribe: attempting to bribe a teacher for the answers to a controlled assessment or for their assistance during the assessment;
- impersonation: one student taking a controlled assessment on behalf of another to gain advantage;
- falsifying/fabricating data: students 'making up' data on which a controlled assessment is based, which they are supposed to have collected;
- any other attempt to deceive the school and examination body in order to gain a mark which they would not have achieved without the deception.

In the case of suspected academic misconduct the case will be dealt with in line with the school's policy.

Ownership of controlled assessment

Any piece of controlled assessment created by a student remains under the ownership of the school and, once submitted, will be securely stored by the school until it has no further value as examination materials.

The examination board will request samples of students' work to assess the internal marking of the student work. In these circumstances, any work sent to the board under this process may be retained by the examination board and used by them for training purposes.

Departments will log the receipt of controlled assessments by ensuring that all finished work is signed for by the appropriate member of staff and signed off by the student.

It is strongly recommended that students keep a copy of controlled assessments, or ask for a photocopy once the work has been marked, for their own records.

Heads of Department may make their own arrangements to return work to students once it has no further value to the school.

Appeals Procedure

There may be circumstances when a student feels that their work has not been treated fairly and therefore all students may submit an internal appeal to examine whether the work was treated in accordance with the policies and procedures laid down by the school and the examination bodies. The procedure is:

- the appeal must be submitted to the Headteacher in writing at least four weeks before the last exam in the series in which the controlled assessment was submitted;
- the Headteacher will investigate any breaches to the school's controlled assessment, internal assessment or marking policies. This will include consideration of the examinations body's procedures;
- the investigation will take place before the final examination in the series has been completed;
- the outcome of the investigation will determine whether the appeal will be successful, require escalation, or be rejected.

ANNEX 2: Malpractice and Appeals

Controlled Assessment or Portfolio - Malpractice by a Student

Suspected malpractice discovered **prior** to the student signing the declaration of authentication will be dealt with by the Exams Officer in consultation with the teacher, Head of Department and Headteacher. The student will be interviewed as part of this process.

The Exams Officer will inform the student and/or parent/carer in writing of the action to be taken and the potential consequences regarding the subject award. They will then have five working days to appeal in writing to the Headteacher, giving reasons for the appeal. The appeal process will follow that given below.

Suspected malpractice discovered **after** the student has signed the declaration of authentication will be dealt with by the Exams Officer and Headteacher according to the procedures laid down by the Awarding Body and given in the JCQ booklet *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures*. A copy of the booklet can be found on the JCQ website (www.jcq.org.uk). The student and parent/carer will be informed in writing that the suspected malpractice has been reported to the Awarding Body.

Written Examinations - Malpractice by a Student

Reports of suspected malpractice in written examinations will be dealt with by the Exams Officer and Headteacher according to the procedures laid down by the Awarding Body and given in the JCQ booklet *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures*. A copy of the booklet can be found on the JCQ website (www.jcq.org.uk). The student and parent/carer will be informed in writing that the suspected malpractice has been reported to the Awarding Body.

Appeals to Awarding Bodies

Each Awarding Body publishes procedures for appeals against its decisions and the Exams Officer will advise students and parents of these procedures as necessary.

Internal Appeals Procedure - Controlled Assessment

In accordance with the Code of Practice for the conduct of external qualifications produced by the JCQ, Millthorpe School is committed to ensuring that:

- internal assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding;
- assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant specifications for each subject;
- the consistency of internal assessment is assured through internal standardisation as set out by the Awarding Bodies;

- staff responsible for internal standardisation and assessment attend any compulsory training sessions organised by the Awarding Bodies.

Appeals may be made to the School regarding the *procedures* used in internal assessment, but *not the actual marks or grades* submitted by the school for moderation by the Awarding Body, and should normally be made only when other mechanisms within the school (e.g. discussion between student/carer and teacher) have failed to resolve the matter.

A student or parent/carer wishing to appeal against the procedures used in internal assessments should contact the Exams Officer as soon as possible to discuss the appeal and a written appeal must be received by the Headteacher at least two weeks before the date of the last written examination in the subject, or by 1 June in the case of subjects without a final written paper. The written appeal must state the details of the complaint and the reasons for the appeal.

A copy of the appeal letter will be given to the teacher(s) concerned in making the assessment which is the subject of the appeal. A written response will be made by the teacher(s) within three working days.

An appeals panel consisting of the Senior Leader responsible for Examinations, the Exams Officer and the relevant Head of Department will meet within a further three working days to consider the appeal and response from the teacher(s). They will notify the student and parent/carer of the outcome of the appeal and the reason(s) for that outcome, including a copy of the teacher's response. A copy of all the documents will be kept by the Exams Officer.

If the student or parent/carer is not satisfied with the written response they should write to the Headteacher within seven days of the date of the outcome notice to request a personal hearing. The Headteacher will set a date for the hearing to take place before the end of the summer term, allowing at least three days notice to the student or parent/carer. The student should be allowed sight of all documents relevant to the assessment (e.g. marks given, assessments made) in advance of the hearing. The hearing panel will consist of the Headteacher, a governor and the relevant Head of Department. At the hearing the teacher and student or parent/carer should have the opportunity to hear each other's submission to the panel. Where a student is presenting their own case they may be accompanied by a (single) carer/friend. Written notice of the outcome of the hearing, and the reasons for that outcome, will be sent to the student or parent/carer within three working days, with a copy to the Exams Officer.

The Exams Officer will inform the Awarding Body immediately if there is any change to the internally assessed mark as a result of the appeal.

All procedures must be completed before the end of the summer term so that any changes to internal assessment marks can be incorporated in results before they are published.