

## Examinations Policy

**Primary person responsible for updates to this policy:** Chris Randell

**Job title:** Principal

**Last review date:** June 2021

**Next review date:** June 2022

**Relevant ISI coding (if applicable)**

**Circulation:** This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

## Examinations Policy

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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.
- to ensure the Centre complies with Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations and awarding body guidelines.

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 Head of Centre, Senior Leadership Team and Examinations Manager.

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

### 1. 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*.
- Appoints a member of staff to provide analysis of exam results.

### Examinations Manager

- 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.
- Preparation for and organise all exams, both internal and external, in accordance with the regulations laid down by the regulators and awarding bodies. This includes displaying the correct exam posters as per JCQ regulations.
- 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.
- Consults 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.
- To carry out subject examination entries to awarding bodies.
- To receive and store all examination papers as they arrive and be responsible for all examination stationery.
- To ensure examination papers, coursework and estimated grade forms are dispatched to the exam board/examiners as required by each awarding body.
- With SENCO: administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication *A guide to the special consideration process*.
- Disseminate all relevant exam regulations paperwork to students and brief students about these regulations.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Maintain accurate records for all examinations, including seating plans, student exam cards and registers.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- 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 SLT, any post results service requests.

### Heads of Departments

- 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 Manager.

- Accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Decisions on post-results procedures.

#### **Teachers**

- Supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Head of Department and/or Exams Manager.

#### **The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the Exams 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 Exams Manager to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.
- Apply for special consideration as and when required.

#### **Invigilators**

- Support the Exams Manager when preparing the exams room
- Assist with the collection of exam papers and all relevant equipment from the exams office prior to the examination.
- Supervise students and ensure JCQ 'Instructions for conducting examinations' are adhered to.
- Assist with the smooth and efficient running of the examinations.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring their return to the Exams Office.

#### **Candidates**

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Ensure they know the date, time and location of all their exams.
- Understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework or controlled assessment as their own.
- Ensure they abide by and are aware of the JCQ information for candidates for written and on-line examinations.
- Ensure they are aware of all deadlines for coursework / controlled assessments, entries and post results requests and that they meet stated deadlines.

#### **The statutory tests and qualifications offered**

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre and Heads of Faculties.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, iGCSE, GCE and Functional Skills.

The college offers its own suite of exams within the International Foundation Programme (IFP) that is examined under the same conditions as statutory tests.

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 Manager must be informed as soon as the decision is made.

Informing the Exams Manager of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of Department.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the subject teacher, Head of Year, Principal and the candidates' parents/carers.

## **2. Exam seasons and timetables**

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in the College Academic Calendar.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in the Examinations Academic Year Planner and Examinations Organiser.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

### **Exam seasons**

Internal exams are scheduled in December and March.

External exams are scheduled in November (resits), May and June.

Internal exams in Years 11, 12 and 13 are held under external exam conditions.

The Head of Centre decides on which exam series are used in the college.

### **Timetables**

The Exams Manager will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

## **3. Entries, late entries and retakes**

### **Entries**

It is the Head of Departments responsibility to check that all entry codes and details are correct and to advise the Exams Manager of any amendments.

It is the students' responsibility to check that all entries and personal details are correct and to advise the Exams Manager of any amendments by the stated deadlines.

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by their subject teachers.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal, which must be agreed by the Head of Faculty. Any entries requested by the student or parent/carer and not supported by the subject teacher must be paid for by the student.

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

### **Late Entries**

Entry deadlines are circulated to all departments via e-mail, Abbey Times and general exam meetings.

Late entries are authorised by Heads of Faculties and will incur penalty fees from the awarding bodies, which will be payable by the subject/department.

### **Retakes**

Candidates are allowed a reasonable number of retakes per subject in AS and A2 levels. GCSE retakes will be allowed in exceptional circumstances and to ensure compliance with attainment requirements.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates.

## **4. Exam fees**

**All fees are set out in the 'Fees Sheet'**

Amendments to entries incur extra cost.

All fees (course fees and separate examination fees where applicable) must be paid before students take public examinations. Students with unpaid fees may have their examination entries withdrawn.

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.

Exam fees are included in the tuition fees. Late entries will incur a standard late entry fee of £80 per A-level or GCSE exam and will be invoiced and must be paid before the entry can be made. Late entry deadlines are: 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021 for November 2021 exams and 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 for Summer 2022 exams series. Students are responsible for making sure their entries are correct and have two opportunities to check their entries.

## **5. The Equality Act, Disability Discriminations Act, special needs and Access Arrangements**

## **The Equality Act**

The Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the Equality Act to general qualifications. All exam office staff must ensure that the Access Arrangements Regulations and Guidance are consistent with the law.

## **Disability Discrimination Act**

The [Disability Discrimination Act](#) (DDA) of 2005 aim to ensure that disabled people are treated in a fair and equal way. The DDA is fully adhered to at Abbey College.

## **Special needs**

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO.

The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENCO can then inform the examinations team of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

## **Access Arrangements**

A candidate's Access Arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO and then confirmed by an awarding body.

Making Access Arrangements for candidates to sit exams is the responsibility of the SENCO.

Submitting completed Access Arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of Exams Manager/SENCO.

Rooming and invigilation for Access Arrangements candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

## **6. Contingency planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and the Exams Manager.

JCQ advice to centres: ANNEX A

Reference to contingency planning can be found in the College Business Contingency Plan.

## **7. Emergency evacuation procedures**

Emergency evacuation procedures can be found in ANNEX B

## **8. Estimated grades**

Heads of Departments are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Manager when requested by the Exams Manager and exam boards.

## **9. Managing Invigilators and exam days**

### **Managing Invigilators**

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for all external and internal exams as timetabled by the exams office.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Manager.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the college administration.

Invigilators are timetabled, trained and briefed by the Exams Manager.

### **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.

The exams team and invigilators are responsible for setting up the exam desk and chair requirements in allocated rooms.

The Lead Invigilator/Exams Manager will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present prior to the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but will not be allowed to enter the exam room or advise on which questions are to be attempted.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Departments by the Lead Invigilator and/or Exams Manager.

The Head of Centre and Exams Manager are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

## **10. Candidates, clashes and special consideration**

### **Candidates**

The Exams Manager will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates will be given during college assembly time.



In the 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 Exams Officer/Lead Invigilator.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose, as agreed by the Lead Invigilator, and will be accompanied by a member of staff and returned immediately to the exam room.

Student Services will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

### **Clashes**

The Exams Manager and Heads of Years will be responsible for identifying clash candidates, arranging supervision within the centre or arranging overnight supervision as necessary according to the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Exams.

### **Special consideration**

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be ill during the exam itself, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's Head of Year or Exams Manager to that effect.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The SENCO will then submit a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body prior to the JCQ deadline date.

## **11. Reviews of marking - centre assessed marks (GCSE controlled assessments, GCE coursework, GCE and GCSE non-examination assessments and Project qualifications)**

Abbey College Manchester is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff mark candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. Abbey College Manchester is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

## **12. Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)**

### **Results**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre and e-mailed via In Touch.

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

Third parties may collect candidate's results only with prior written authorisation from the candidate to the Exams Officer or Student Services Manager.

Uncollected results will be posted to the candidate's address on the school information system.

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

### **EARs**

Where a candidate or subject teacher is unhappy with the mark awarded for a particular externally marked exam, a clerical check or review of original marking may be requested via the exams office. The candidate will be required to acknowledge that his/her grade may be confirmed, raised or lowered.

### **ATS**

Candidates may request the return of their scripts for which they will be charged by the exam board fee.

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

Review of marking cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

## **13. Certificates**

Candidates may collect their certificates in person. If they are unable to attend they will be posted to their home address.

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.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

Note: The Covid-19 situation means that in the summer of 2020 post exams services will be different. The college will follow JCQ guidance on this.

Head of Centre

Exams Manager

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Date

Date

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#### **ANNEX A**

#### **JCQ Advice to centres: Examinations during severe weather conditions and periods of disruption**

Awarding bodies have well-rehearsed processes in place to deal with disruption caused by severe weather conditions, which ensure that no student is disadvantaged.

It is important to note that rescheduling the examinations is not an option due to the consequences this would have across the system. For example, it would reduce significantly the amount of time schools and colleges have to teach, and students to learn, in preparation for the summer examination series. The integrity of the question papers could also be compromised, as the task of ensuring that all schools and colleges do not offer the examinations on the original scheduled date would be difficult to undertake and guarantee.

Taking all the factors in to account, drawing upon experience of previous years such as the disruption caused by adverse weather conditions in 2010 and 2011, and in consultation with the regulators, awarding bodies have agreed the following:

Wherever possible the examinations should be conducted according to the centre's published examination timetable.

If conditions are so severe that a decision is made to close the school or college, whether by the local authority or the senior leadership team, or where a school or college remains open but some individual candidates are unable to reach it because of extreme weather conditions, and no alternative arrangements can be made to take the examination at a different location, then the options are:

- Where candidates are entered for examinations but this is not their terminal (final) examination series, they may be entered again for the June 2012 series.

- Where candidates are sitting units as part of their terminal examination series or no further re-sit opportunity is available, then an application for Special Consideration may be made. The candidate must meet the published criteria for Special Consideration as indicated in the JCQ publication, Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.

There is a published contingency plan for the examinations system at <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-12-13-joint-contingency-plan-nov-2011-v5.pdf> Additional guidance is also available on the websites of individual awarding bodies and students should contact their school or college for further information.

JCQ can be contacted on 0207 638 4132 or via email: [info@jcq.org.uk](mailto:info@jcq.org.uk)

## **ANNEX B**

### **Emergency evacuation procedure for examinations**

The invigilator **must** take the following action in an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert:

- Stop the candidates from writing
- Collect the attendance register (**in order to ensure all candidates are present**)
- Evacuate the examination room in line with the instructions given by the appropriate authority
- Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room
- Candidates should leave the room in silence
- Make sure that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination
- Make a note of the time of the interruption and how long it lasted
- Allow the candidates the full working time set for the examination
- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination

- Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and send to the relevant awarding body

### **ANNEX C**

#### **Reviews of marking - centre assessed marks (GCSE controlled assessments, GCE coursework, GCE and GCSE non-examination assessments and Project qualifications)**

1. Abbey College Manchester will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.
2. Abbey College Manchester will inform candidates that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.
3. Abbey College Manchester will, having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate.
4. Abbey College Manchester will provide candidates with sufficient time in order to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision.
5. Abbey College Manchester will provide a clear deadline for candidates to submit a request for a review of the centre's marking. Requests will not be accepted after this deadline. Requests **must** be made in writing.
6. Abbey College Manchester will allow sufficient time for the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline.
7. Abbey College Manchester will ensure that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review.
8. Abbey College Manchester will instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
9. Abbey College Manchester will inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.

10. The outcome of the review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre. A written record of the review will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request.

The moderation process carried out by the awarding bodies may result in a mark change, either upwards or downwards, even after an internal review. The internal review process is in place to ensure consistency of marking within the centre, whereas moderation by the awarding body ensures that centre marking is line with national standards. The mark submitted to the awarding body is subject to change and should therefore be considered provisional.