

POLICY

Examinations

Date of approval by governing body:	September 2015
Review date:	Autumn 2016
Policy Owner:	Assistant Headteacher: Student Progress

The King's has a pivotal role to play in every student's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through our mission to ensure that every student learns with truth and love, we ensure that we support each student through the promotion of the Christian values of justice, grace, trust, thankfulness, aspiration and celebration (as identified, by students, staff and governors). This mission and these values underpin this policy and its related practices.

Preamble

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure that 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 annually, in September.

Exam responsibilities

Head of centre (or designated member of SLT)

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks;
- The head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the summary in section 14 and to the JCQ document *suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*;
- Organisation of teaching and learning;
- External validation of all courses where applicable

Data Manager

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- Advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards;
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar of key dates for exam sessions in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events;
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries;
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts;
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ *Access arrangements and special considerations regulations* and *Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations*;
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes;
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges;
- Line manages all exams invigilators and organises their recruitment, training and monitors daily duties for the co-ordination of exams;
- Prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made;

- Submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule;
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark request;s
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Course Leader

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries;
- Involvement in post-results procedures;
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines;
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets;
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

Careers Co-ordinator

- Guidance and careers information.

Course Teacher

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course);
- Submission of candidate names to Subject Leader / Teacher in Charge for all exam entries.

SENDCo

- Administration of access arrangements;
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements;
- Provision of additional support — with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to help candidates achieve their course aims.

Lead invigilator / Invigilators

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam;
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.

Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries;
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Administrative staff

- Support for the input of data.
- Posting of exam papers.

Statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the heads of department and the senior leadership team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, A levels, NVQs, BTECs, EPQ, ECDL and CACHE.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year, or alternatively on the school website. If there is to be a change of syllabus from the current year, the exams office must be informed by the end of the current year.

14-19 Students

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

Exam seasons and timetables

Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled throughout the year.

External exams are scheduled typically in November, January, March and May/June.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Timetables

The Data Manager will circulate the exam timetables for external exams, once these are confirmed. The Data Manager will circulate the exam timetables for internal exams once these are confirmed.

Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Leader / Teachers in Charge, subject teachers and the Assistant Headteacher.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does accept entries from external candidates.

Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to All Staff via email and the online school calendar.

Late entries are authorised by Assistant Headteacher and Head of Centre / nominated member of SLT.

Retakes

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the Candidates, Subject Teachers, Exams Staff, Subject Leaders / Teachers in Charge. (See also section 5: Exam fees)

Exam fees

All initial qualification registrations and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments.

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.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements.

This fees reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of 14-19 courses.

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the centre. (See also section: Retakes)

Departments must pay the fees for an enquiry about a result should it not match the criteria given by the Head of Centre. Should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry, Candidates must then pay the fee for EAR. (See also section: Enquiries about results [EARs])

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements (also referred to as “reasonable adjustment”)

DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENDCO or by a medical professional.

The SENDCO 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 SENDCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENDCO and the Data Manager.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENDCO.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENDCO.

Estimated grades

The Subject Leader / Teacher in Charge will submit estimated grades to the Data Manager when requested by Examination Boards. A list of key dates is published annually by Exams Staff via online School calendar.

Managing invigilators and exam days

Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will only be used for external exams.

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

Securing the necessary DBS (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Head's PA.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.
Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Data Manager.
Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the local authority.

Exam days

The Data Manager and the Progress 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.

The Data Manager is responsible for organising and setting up the allocated rooms.

The Data Manager (or nominated invigilator) will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions 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 a session. Papers will be distributed to Subject Leaders / Teachers in Charge at the end of the exam session.

Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.

The Centre 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.

Clash candidates

The Exams Staff will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts and identifying a secure venue. The Centre will be responsible for arranging overnight stays.

Special consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

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

Manager will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Appeals against Internal Assessment of Work for External Qualifications

The King's CE (A) School is committed to ensuring that whenever its staffs assesses students' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments are conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity. The centre is committed to ensuring that assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant specifications for each subject. Where a set of work is divided between staff, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency.

If a student feels that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, s/he may make use of this appeals procedure. Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade submitted by the centre for moderation by the awarding body.

This procedure is available from the exams office and is posted on the exams notice board.

1. Appeals should be made as early as possible and at least two weeks before the end of the course work deadline.
2. Appeals should be made in writing by the candidate's parent/carer to the exams officer (EO), who will investigate the appeal with at least two other members of staff who have not been involved in the internal assessment decision. If the EO was directly involved in the assessment in question, the Headteacher will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise if the EO is not able to conduct the investigation for some other reason.
3. The purpose of the appeal will be to decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the awarding body and the examinations code of practice of the QCA.
4. The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any relevant correspondence with the awarding body and any changes made to the procedure relating to internal assessment.
5. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Headteacher and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of The King's Church of England School and is not covered by this procedure. If you have concerns about it, please ask the Exams Staff for a copy of the appeals procedure of the relevant awarding body.

Complaints

Any complaints or concerns expressed by students or their representatives (e.g.) parents with regard to any element of the examination process should be addressed initially to the course leader, who will attempt to resolve the problem or (if unable so to do) will refer it to the Data Manager.

The Data Manager will attempt to resolve the problem and if unable so to do will refer it either to the Headteacher or to the relevant examination board, depending upon the nature of the problem.

Controlled Assessments

Senior leadership team

- Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled 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 controlled assessments. (It is advisable that controlled 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 controlled 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 controlled assessments.

Heads of faculty

- Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular qualification;
- 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 controlled 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 controlled assessments*;
- Understand and comply with the awarding body's specification for conducting controlled 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 controlled 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 (SENDCo) 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;
- Download and distribute marksheets for teaching staff to use;
- **In exceptional circumstances** where controlled assessments cannot be conducted in the classroom, arrange suitable accommodation where controlled 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.

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 / by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae).

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Business Manager.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Data Manager.

EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry

carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged. (See section 5: Exam fees)

ATS

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

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

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

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

Maladministration and Malpractice

Definitions

Malpractice can be defined as

“any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process and/or the validity of certificates”.

It covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise any element of the qualification process and also covers misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain or groups of learners.

Maladministration can be defined as:

“any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration.”

Making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration

Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time must immediately the Exams officer who will (where deemed relevant in conjunction with the Assistant Headteacher: Student Progress) determine (i) whether it is an investigating matter for the school or the examining board; and (ii) whether and at which point to notify the examining authority. Any decision to recommend internal investigation must be approved by the Headteacher.

Internal Investigation process

The Headteacher will nominate one or more persons to carry out the investigation and to report back within a given time, which should not exceed 2 calendar weeks. The Headteacher will then determine what further action, if any, needs to be taken, including consultation with the examining authority, especially where there is a risk that any certificates may be invalidated.

Certificates

Certificates are presented in person or posted (second class) to the last known address of the student.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees.

A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The centre retains certificates for two years.