



the **ST LAWRENCE** academy

Examinations Policy

Within the academy we strive to create a learning environment, curriculum, experiences and relationships in which all individuals can find expression, be nourished and developed.

The academy commits itself to creating an environment for everyone that is characterised by our core values of Truth, Justice, Forgiveness, Generosity and Respect. These values have been used to determine this policy.

The objective of this exam policy is:

- 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 year by the Principal, Trustees and the Exams Officer. Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk

1. Exam Responsibilities

Principal:

Overall responsibility for the academy as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the Principal is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice (refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*).

Exams Officer:

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

- advises the Senior Leadership, Subject Leaders, teaching staff and other relevant staff on the exam timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, trustees 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 exam timetable that will affect them
- consults with staff to ensure 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 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 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
- assists with preparation and presentation of 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/controlled assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned controlled assessments 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 requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Vice Principal:

- External validation of courses followed at Key Stages 3/4 / post-16.

Director of Learning and Teaching

- Organisation of learning and teaching

Subject Leaders:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- Accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment/mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer.

Person i/c IAG:

- Guidance and careers information

Teaching staff:

- Supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Subject Leader and/or Exams Officer
- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)

SENCo:

- Administration of access arrangements
- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements and notifying the Exams Officer in good time to that they are able to process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)
- 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
- Working with the Exams Officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms

Lead invigilator/invigilators:

- Assists the Exams Officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations
- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the Exams Officer
- Organises the training and monitoring the team of invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams

Candidates:

- Confirmation and signing of entries
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own
- Ensuring the conduct of themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations

2. The Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Principal.

The qualifications offered are GCSE, iGCSE, BTEC, Functional Skills, Foundation Learning, Vocational qualifications and Entry Level.

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 has been a change of specification from the previous year, the exams office must be informed immediately.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers and the Subject Leaders.

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

3. Exam Series and Timetables

3.1 Exam Series

Internal exams are scheduled throughout the year dependent on the year group.

External exams are scheduled in November, January, March and the summer, these could be either timetabled exams and/or on demand exams.

Internal exams are conducted under external exam conditions. Each department will be responsible for producing exam papers which are suitable for the time slot allocated to their subject. External examinations are invigilated by non-teaching staff/invigilators. Departments must ensure that they are represented at the start of each exam and at the end.

The centre does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the awarding body, Subject Leader and Exams Officer.

3.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams.

4. Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Leaders. Lists of candidates for each subject area are copied to and confirmed by the Principal.

Candidates, or parents/carers, cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre accepts external entries from former candidates only / staff.

4.2 Late Entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to subject leaders via email and the staff handbook. Subject Leaders will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Resit decisions will be made by Subject Leaders and confirmed by the Principal.

Late entries are authorised by the Subject Leaders, and confirmed by the Principal.

5. Exam Fees

The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates including resit fees.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by departments. The Exam Officer will publish the deadlines well in advance for each exam series.

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.

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 that they provide candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ.

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements

6.1 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.

6.2 Special Needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCo. The SENCo will inform subject staff of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

The SENCo will ensure the exams officer has all information and evidence needed on each candidate with special needs requiring special access arrangements.

6.3 Access Arrangements

The SENCo, in consultation with the exam officer will complete the necessary paperwork and ensure that applications for access arrangements are submitted to the awarding bodies by the deadlines set.

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCo and the Exams Officer. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer in conjunction with the SENCo.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the lead invigilator in conjunction with the Office Manager and SENCo.

6.4 Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Principal. Contingency plans are available via the risk management process are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding bodies.

7. Estimated Grades

The Subject Leaders will submit estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer and before the deadlines submitted by the awarding bodies.

8. Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

8.1 Managing Invigilators

Departmental invigilators will be used for internal exams. Internal invigilators will be used for external exams. The recruitment of external invigilators is the responsibility of the Office Manager in consultation with the Exams Officer.

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' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

Internal and external invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the lead invigilator with the support of the Office Manager.

8.2 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 is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements in advance.

The Office Manager and the lead invigilator are responsible for overseeing the conduct of other invigilators and will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. The lead invigilator will check attendance according to the seating plan.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam with the permission of the Principal. Any staff present must be in accordance with the role defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed and what they can do. In practical exams, subject staffs availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Exam papers must not be read by subject staff or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to subject leaders in accordance with JCQ's recommendations.

After an exam the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to the awarding bodies.

Malpractice

The Principal will be responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

9. Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration

9.1 Candidates

The Exams Officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidate's use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times. Candidate's 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 specifications of that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and any 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.

Candidates who leave the exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The Exams Officer/Director of Student Progress 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, with support from the relevant staff.

9.2 Clash Candidates

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

9.3 Special Consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the Exams Officer, or the lead 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 Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Coursework/Controlled Assessments and Appeals Against Internal Assessments

10.1 Coursework/controlled assessments

Candidates who have to prepare coursework/controlled assessments should do so by the end of the course.

Subject Leaders will ensure all coursework/controlled assessments are ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by Subject Leaders by deadline given in advance.

10.2 Appeals Against Internal Assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office.

The main points are:

- appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework/controlled assessment has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the Principal (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements

The Principal's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

11. Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access To Scripts (ATS)

11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the centre, by email or by post to their home address.

Arrangements for the academy to be open on results days are made by the Principal.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Principal.

11.2 Enquires About Results (EARs)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. These should be made within three days of scrutiny of the results.

If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Principal will investigate the feasibility of asking for a remark at the centre's expense. A request for a remark or clerical check requires written consent of the candidate.

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 Appeal's Procedure document.

11.3 Access To Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within three days for 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.

Re-marks cannot be applied once an original script has been returned. (See also section 5: Exam Fees)

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person or posted (recorded delivery) for which there is a pre-paid charge of £2.50 to cover costs.

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

Uncollected certificates will be kept for a period of 9 years, after which they will be destroyed.

Replacement certificates are only issued by the awarding bodies and the candidates will need to contact the relevant awarding body directly to arrange this.

Review

In order to ensure that it reflects current best practice, this policy will be reviewed every year.

The next review date is: September 2015