



Examinations Policy Bexley Grammar School

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The purpose of this examinations policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of examinations is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates.
- to ensure the operation of an efficient examinations system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the Centre's examination processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

The examinations policy will be reviewed every year. The examinations policy will be reviewed by the Examinations Officer and the Head of Centre.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk

Exam Responsibilities:

The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on [malpractice in examinations and assessments](#)

Examinations Officer: (this is the individual to whom the Head of Centre has delegated responsibility for the administration of exams in their centre):

- manages the administration of internal exams for Years 10 and 11 and external exams
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on the annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- oversees the production and distribution to all centre staff and candidates, of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- administers access arrangements with the SENCo and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ [guidance on the special consideration process](#)
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- tracks, dispatches and arranges for the storage of returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.
- reports all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on [malpractice in examinations and assessments](#)

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post results procedures.

Teachers are Responsible for:

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

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is responsible for

- identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they can put exam day arrangements in place
- processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

Invigilators are responsible for:

- assisting 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 ensuring their return to the exams office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations and the Bexley Grammar School Academic Honesty Policy.

Qualifications Offered:

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Curriculum Deputy in liaison with the Senior Team and Heads of Department.

Currently the types of qualifications offered are: GCSEs and the IB Diploma.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in BGS's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next academic year, the exams office must be informed by the end of the current academic year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of Heads of Department in liaison with the Curriculum Deputy.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Curriculum Deputy in consultation with the Head of Department and Director of Studies.

Exam Series:

Year 12 and Year 10 internal mock exams are scheduled in the first and second weeks of the summer term respectively. Year 13 internal mock exams are scheduled immediately after the half term break in the autumn term and Year 11 internal mock exams are scheduled immediately after the Christmas break, at the start of the spring term.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in the summer series of exams for Years 11 and 13.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions where practical.

The Curriculum Deputy in consultation with the Senior Team decides which exam series are used in the Centre.

Exam Timetables:

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and external exams as soon as is practicable.

Entries, entry details and late entries:

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal but the final decision rests with the Centre.

BGS does not, in general, accept entries from private candidates.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department via email.

Heads of Department will provide estimated entry information to the Exams Officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (ie late) require the authorisation in writing of the Head of Department.

Resit decisions will be made by the student in consultation with the subject teacher / Head of Department.

Exam Fees:

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.

The Exams Officer will publish the deadline for action well in advance for each exams series.

GCSE entry fees are paid by the Centre.

IB entry fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendments fees are paid by the Department concerned.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates:

- if they fail to sit an exam
- if they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Resit fees are paid by the student unless by prior arrangement with the Head of Department.

Equality Legislation:

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

The Centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer in consultation with the Head of Centre.

Access Arrangements:

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special education needs and any special arrangement that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo.

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

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SEN Examinations coordinator with the exams officer.

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

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates as defined in the [JCQ access arrangements regulations](#), will be organised by the Exams Officer.

Use of Word Processors:

The normal way of working for exam candidates, as directed by the Head of Centre, is that candidates handwrite their exams. An exception to this is where a candidate may have an approved access arrangement in place, for example the use of a scribe/speech recognition technology. There are also exceptions where a candidate may be awarded the use of a word processor in exams. The principal criteria when the school is deciding whether to grant the use of a word processor are that:

- The student has a firmly established need and
- It is the student's normal way of working and
- It is appropriate to their needs and
- by not being awarded a word processor would be at a substantial disadvantage to other candidates.

A word processor is awarded when

- The speed of writing prevents the candidate from demonstrating their knowledge and skills
- Handwriting is illegible to the point of preventing the candidate from demonstrating their knowledge and skills.

Pupils who may benefit from the use of a word processor are candidates that have been observed to have:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly
- A medical condition affecting the student's ability to write
- A physical disability affecting the student's ability to write
- A sensory impairment
- Poor handwriting
- Planning and organisational problems when writing by hand.

A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because the candidate prefers to type in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because the candidate uses a laptop at home.

We will make sure that:

- The proposed arrangement will not disadvantage or advantage a candidate.
- The use of a word processor will not compromise the assessment objectives or the integrity of the assessment and will be used under secure conditions. Where these objectives would be compromised, then a word processor will not be granted for use by a candidate

We will also make sure that the word processor:

- Has the spelling and grammar check and predictive text software disabled
- Does not have internet connectivity during the exam
- Has been cleared of any previously stored data, along with any portable storage medium used and where any authorised memory stick is provided to or used by the candidate, the memory stick will be cleared of any previously stored data

- Does not allow access to other applications such as a calculator (where prohibited), spreadsheets or emails
- Does not have graphic packages or computed-aided design software, unless permission is given
- Does not have computer reading (text to speech) software, unless the candidate has permission
- Does not have speech recognition technology, unless the candidate has permission

The word processor will not be used on the candidate's behalf by a third party unless the candidate has permission to use a scribe.

All equipment will be checked to make sure it's in working order and sufficiently charged for the duration of the examination.

Candidates provided with the use of a word processor will be accommodated in such a way that other candidates are not disturbed and cannot read the screen. Where we accommodate a candidate in another room, a separate invigilator will be present.

Candidates will be:

- Reminded to make sure that the centre number, candidate number and the unit/component code appear on each page as a header or footer, or to handwrite their details on the printed documents where this feature is not available (where the candidate needs to handwrite their details, they will be supervised to make sure that's solely what they're doing and not re-reading their answers or amending their work in any way)
- Reminded to save their work at regular intervals, unless 'autosave' has been set up on the device to make sure that the candidate's work is not lost because of a technical issue
- Advised to use a minimum font size of 12pt and double spacing

Each page of the typed script will be numbered.

The word processor will be connected to a printer so that the script can be printed off and will be done once the examination is over. The candidate must be present to verify that the work is their own and then the script will be attached to any answer booklet that contains some of the answers. We may also be required by the awarding body to include a word processor cover sheet with the candidate's typed script.

We may retain electronic copies of a word-processed script and this may be accepted by an awarding body where the printed copy has been lost and it is demonstrated that the file has been kept securely.

Contingency Planning:

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

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

Estimated Grades:

Heads of Department are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

Managing Invigilators:

External invigilation staff will be used to support current teaching and non-teaching staff to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for internal and external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Personnel Officer (currently the Head's PA).

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the Centre.

Invigilators rates of pay are set by the Centre in consultation with Bexley guidance.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Malpractice:

The Head of Centre, in consultation with the Exams Officer, invigilators and the Senior Leadership Team, is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam Days:

The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Site management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms and will be advised of requirements at least one week in advance.

The Exams Officer / Invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team and the relevant Director of Studies/Senior Academic Mentor may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed and what they can do.

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

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no earlier than 24 hours after candidates have completed it.

After an exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with designated invigilators.

Candidates:

The Exams Officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates will be given by the Director of Studies or the Curriculum Deputy

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the Centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities ~ no potential technological/web enabled sources of information. 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.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an invigilator at all times.

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

Clash Candidates:

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

Special Consideration:

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the Centre's Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 3 days of the exam.

The Exams Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body by the scheduled deadline.

Internal Assessment:

Teaching staff who deliver non-examination assessments will follow the correct specifications and the specification and instructions provided by the awarding body, or JCQ [instructions for conducting non-examination assessments](#) if appropriate.

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

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Head of Department. The Exams Officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the Centre's internal appeals procedure (IAP) document.

Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. Bexley Grammar School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Pupils **may not** use AI tools:

- During assessments, including internal and external assessments, and coursework
- To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work

Pupils **may** use AI tools:

- As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas
- When specifically studying and discussing AI in schoolwork, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed

Staff should:

- Be aware that AI tools are still being developed and should use such tools with caution as they may provide inaccurate, inappropriate or biased content

- Make students aware of the risks of using AI tools and that they need to appropriately reference AI as a source of information to maintain the integrity of assessments

For more information on AI misuse, see [guidance from JCQ on AI use in assessments](#). Any misuse of AI tools may be treated as malpractice.

Results:

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days,

- ☐ in person at the centre; or
- ☐ by email (school email address)

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

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

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

Enquiries about Results (EARS):

EARS may be requested by Centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the candidate.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the candidate in conjunction with the Head of Department.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the Centre will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer, following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS):

After the release of results, candidates may ask the Exams Officer to request the return of written exam papers by the JCQ deadline for the ATS service.

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

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

The cost of ATS will be paid by the candidate unless the script has been requested by a Department.

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

Certificates:

Candidates will receive their certificates

- ☐ in person at the centre; or
- ☐ by recorded post 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.

The Centre currently retains certificates for 14 years.

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.

Linked Policies:

The following linked policies and procedure documents will be available during an examinations centre inspection:

- child protection/safeguarding policy, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance, which satisfies current legislative requirements;
- complaints policy;
- conflicts of interest policy;
- data protection policy;
- equalities policy;
- examination contingency plan covering all aspects of examination administration;
- internal appeals procedure;
- malpractice policy;
- Non-examination assessment policy;
- whistleblowing policy;
- use of word processors in examinations policy.