

POLICY: EXAMINATIONS

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: R BLAIZE MONITORING: HEADTEACHER

DATE: December 2017 REVIEW DATE: December 2018

RATIONALE

Exam results are important to Paget High School, in its aims to improve standards and to unlock the full potential of all students. A well-structured and organised system is essential, so that all students, parents and staff have confidence in the examination process in place. Students are familiarised with the rules and regulations that are expected under external examination conditions from the earliest time possible.

PURPOSE

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates
- To ensure that statutory and internal examinations are held under the same conditions.
- To ensure all examinations seasons are timetabled a calendar year in advance, in order that as far as possible parents can avoid removing their sons/daughters from school during examination periods.
- To ensure that all students have equal opportunities to perform to their maximum potential.
- To ensure that all students are entered for examinations in subjects that they have been studying
- To ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all staff.

PRINCIPLES

- It is the responsibility of all involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.
- All entries for examinations are made through the Head of Curriculum Area, Examinations Support Officer and SLT line manager.
- All withdrawals are made through the HOCA, Examinations Support Officer and SLT line manager
- GCE and GCSE results are available to all interested parties on the third and fourth Thursdays in August as required by Examination Boards.
- All students will have equal opportunities to perform to the best of their ability, to fulfil this requirement the Examinations Support Officer and the SENCO will work together to obtain special arrangements and special consideration for students as necessary.

- Trained invigilators will oversee the invigilation of examinations.
- Parents/students will have the opportunity to discuss all results with teaching staff after publication.
- Examinations Support Officer and SLT line manager will provide copies of timetables, invigilation, seating plans and room changes to HOCAs, HOYs, staff and students as appropriate.

CONCLUSION

A well-organised system is vital to reduce examination pressure on all concerned. Examination procedures will be reviewed annually, the Examinations Support Officer and SLT line manager will carry out the review process after consultation with HOCA's. Continuous review of the process is an integral part to the development of the school, the students and the Staff.

WORKING PRACTICE: EXAMINATIONS

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Aims

To provide all departments with as efficient a service as possible in terms of contact with Examination boards, the dissemination of information to designated persons and the expenditure of Examination fees.

Exam Responsibilities

Head of Centre - Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- Responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice.

Assistant Head with Exam Responsibility oversees all aspects relating to examinations including line management of Exams Support Officer.

Exams Support Officer manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results. Responsibilities include:

- Advising 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 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 exam timetable that will affect them
- Consult with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries
- Receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Administer access arrangement and make 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
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Account for income and expenditure relating to all exam costs/charge

- Line manage the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Prepare and present reports to SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made
- Submit candidates' coursework marks including BTEC, track despatch and store returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/remark requests
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams

HOCA's are responsible for:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- Accurate completion of controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets including withdrawal and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams support officer

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Submission of candidates' names to HOCA's

SENCO is responsible for:

- 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 are responsible for:

- 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
- Ensuring all candidates are aware of regulations regarding exams including malpractice
- Ensuring all candidates are equipped as necessary for all exams
- Provide the Exams Support Officer with an attendance sheet which should then be copied to the main office

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation of entries
- Understanding controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own

Administrative Staff are responsible for the posting of exam papers and supporting the input of data.

Exam Seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in December.

External exams are scheduled in November, May and June.

All internal exams must be held in external exam conditions.

The exam series used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre.

The Exams Support Office will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once they are confirmed. The school calendar will also feature these exam periods.

Entries

All course information GCSE, A Level and BTEC, is requested from the HOCA at the beginning of each school year.

Responsibility of HOCA to inform Exam Secretary of which course students need to be registered for.

Exam Secretary will supply HOCA with list of entries for checking/signing - these will then be kept by Exam Secretary for future reference.

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the HOCA/Lead teacher.

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

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

Entry deadlines are circulated to HOCA's via noticeboard and or staff briefings.

Late entries must be authorised by the HOCA.

Candidates are not allowed to re-take an examination as all examinations take place at the end of the course. GCSE English and Mathematics are exceptions to this as they can be retaken in the Autumn term following the publication of results in the summer term.

All course information GCSE, A Level and BTEC, is requested from the HOCA at the beginning of each school year.

Responsibility of HOCA to inform Exam Secretary of which course students need to be entered for.

Exam Secretary will supply HOCA with list of entries for checking/signing - these will then be kept by Exam Secretary for future reference.

Exam Fees

GCSE & A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are also paid by the centre.

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

This section regarding fees will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses.

Retake fees are paid by the centre.

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.

Withdrawals

Withdrawals can be made at any time before the final withdrawal date and before the 'final entries checklist' (see below) is published. Withdrawals should be made by using the appropriate form (Appendix). This form should be submitted to the Exams Support Officer.

Late Withdrawals/Entries

These only require extra expenditure when they are made after the deadline dates. If this action is required then a mistake has been made.

- If they are an oversight by the HOCA's, it will be clear from the internal final entries checklist, then the department will be charged for the mistake through capitation
- If they are required by parental request then the parent/student will be charged the fee
- If they are required due to a student defaulting on coursework, then the student will be charged the fee
- If they are due to an exams Dept. oversight then the fee will have to come out of the exams budget
- If they are required for medical/ genuine problems for the for student then the fee will have to come out of the exams budget

Internal statements of entry

After early entry and before the withdrawal deadline date, students will receive an individual 'Students Exam Details' sheet (appendix) detailing all the examinations we expect them to take in the summer exam season. Students will have to check this sheet very carefully and they and their parents will sign the sheet to show their acceptance. From this sheet it will be understood that if a student defaults in terms of controlled assessment through lack of effort then they will be likely to be charged for the late withdrawal or entry fee if late withdrawal is not possible and an 'X' grade will be awarded. Students should check the details on the sheet with their class teacher and return the sheet within one week of receiving it.

Students will then receive a full exam timetable stating the dates and times of all exams, location, seat number and any information regarding clashes.

Amendment to student details

If a student requests an amendment once his/her certificate has been issued then the student will have to meet the Exam Boards replacement certificate costs plus our administration charge.

Internal final entries checklist

Well before the final dates for withdrawal and final deadline for changes of tiers, each HOCA will be issued with a list of candidates entered for their syllabus subject. At this time this internal list should be vigilantly checked before signing the form to show the authenticity of these entries. The checklist should show tiers of entry if applicable. The signing of this list confirms the entry for their syllabus subject. If any changes are made, the students affected will receive an amended timetable printout.

Internal Assessments and Appeals

It is the duty of HOCAs to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams support officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams support officer by the HOCA.

Estimated Grades

HOCA's will submit estimated grades to the exams office when requested by the exams support officer.

Managing Invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision in all exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office.

Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre of administration.

DBS 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 centre administration.

Photographs of students may be made available so that invigilators can correctly identify students in the examination hall and signing in.

Exam Days

The exams support officer will book all exams 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 lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff and SLT should be present at the start of the exam to assist with the start and identification of candidates/papers 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 HOCA's/Lead teachers at the end of the exam session.

The Lead Invigilator will provide the exams support officer with an attendance sheet which shall be copied to the main office within 30 minutes of the exam beginning. The exams support officer will produce a list of all absent candidates which will be updated at the end of each exam and presented to SLT/HOCA for further action e.g. possible withdrawal.

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.

Malpractice

The exams support officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

If malpractice is suspected, it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to remove candidate(s) from the exam room if deemed necessary. In the absence of the Headteacher, a member of SLT should deputise.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

A person has a disability for the purposes 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 Headteacher and SENCO are responsible for ensuring the School meets the disability provisions under the DDA and the Equality Act 2010.

Access Arrangements

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

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO. She is also responsible for ensuring these access arrangements are made and for submitting completed access arrangement applications to awarding bodies.

Rooming and support for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the exams support officer in liaison with the SENCO.

Clash Candidates

The exams support officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and 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 candidates' 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 exams support officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant body within seven days of the exam.

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre/by post to their official home address (candidates to provide sae).

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the head of centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the head of centre.

The centre aggregates at the end of Year 13 for AS grades, not at the end of Year 12.

EARs

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

ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within 3 days' scrutiny of the results.

If a result is queried, the exams support officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centres' expense.

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

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

Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for. They may be collected on behalf of a candidates by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates may be withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for two years.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of SLT.

Please refer to the schools bad weather policy regarding school closure.

In the event of disruption the following steps should be taken.

- Contact the relevant awarding organisation and follow its instructions.
- Take advice, or follow instructions, from relevant local or national agencies in deciding whether the school or college is able to open.
- Identify whether the exam can be sat at an alternative venue, in agreement with the relevant awarding organisation (completing an Alternative Site Form where applicable).
- Where accommodation is limited, prioritise students whose progression will be severely delayed if they do not take their exams when planned.
- Communicate with parents, carers and students regarding any changes to the exam timetable.
- Advise students, where appropriate, to sit exams in the next available series.

After the exam the exam officer must.

- Consider whether students may be eligible for special consideration.
- Ensure that scripts are stored under secure conditions.
- Return scripts to awarding organisations in line with their instructions. Never make alternative arrangements for the transportation of completed exams scripts, unless told to do so by the awarding organisation.