



Examination Policy

2025-26

Approved by	
Agreed by SLT	
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Purpose of the policy

Willow Park School is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently. This exam policy will ensure that:

- The workforce is well informed and supported
- all centre staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- all exams and assessments are conducted in accordance with JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions *“to ensure that the integrity and security of the examination/assessment system is maintained at all times and is not brought into disrepute”* [JCQ General regulations (GR) 1]
- exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them.

This exam policy will be reviewed annually by HOC and Exams Officer

Centre staff will be informed of this policy by HOC

Roles and responsibilities overview

Head of centre

The head of centre is responsible to the awarding bodies for making sure all examinations/assessments are conducted according to the instructions, and the qualification specifications issued by the awarding bodies. (JCQ GR 1)

The head of centre will:

- be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>(GR)
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>

- <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

The head of centre will ensure:

- the EO attends appropriate training events offered by awarding bodies, MIS providers and other external providers to enable the exam cycle to be effectively managed and administered
- centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process
- centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the EO
- security within the examination process is managed as per JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions
- risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place

Exams officer (EO)

The EO is appointed by the head of centre to act on behalf of the centre in matters relating to the management and administration of examinations and assessments.

The EO will:

- be familiar with the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>
- be familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- ensure key tasks are undertaken and key dates and deadlines met
- recruit, train and deploy a team of internal/external invigilators; appoint lead invigilators, as required

Senior leadership team (SLT)

- will be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo)/Specialist Teacher

- will be familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
- will lead on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')

Assistant for Teaching & Learning (AHTL)

- will ensure teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- will ensure teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body teaching-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- will ensure teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Teaching staff

- will undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- will keep themselves updated with awarding body teaching-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- will attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Invigilators

- will attend training, refresher, briefing and review sessions as required
- will provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate
- will sign a confidentiality and security agreement

Reception staff

- will support the EO in dealing with exam-related deliveries and dispatches with due regard to security at all times

Site staff

- will support the EO in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources

Candidates

Where applicable in this policy, the term 'Candidates' refers to candidates and/or their parents/carers.

The exam cycle

The exams management and administration process that needs to be undertaken throughout the year is often referred to as the **exam cycle** and relevant tasks required within this grouped into the following stages:

- Planning
- Entries
- Pre-exams
- Exam time
- Results and post-results

This exam policy identifies the roles and responsibilities of centre staff within this cycle.

Planning

Information sharing

The head of centre will:

- direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/ice---instructions-for-conducting-examinations>
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration>
 - <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice>

The EO will:

- inform relevant centre staff of JCQ and awarding body documentation relating to the exam cycle that has been updated
- signpost relevant centre staff to information that should be provided to candidates

Information gathering

The EO will:

- undertake an annual information gathering exercise in preparation for each new academic year to ensure data about all qualifications being delivered is up to date and correct
- collate all data into one central point of reference
- research awarding body guidance to identify administrative processes, key tasks, key dates and deadlines for all qualifications
- produce an annual exams plan of key tasks and key dates to ensure all external deadlines can be effectively met; inform key centre staff of internal deadlines

The Assistant Headteacher for Teaching & Learning (AHTL) will:

- respond (or ensure Teaching staff respond) to requests from the EO on information gathering
- meet the internal deadline for return
- inform the EO of any changes to information in a timely manner
- familiarise themselves and their staff with the annual exams plan of internal deadlines

Access arrangements

The SENCo will:

- assess students to identify access arrangements requirements
- gather evidence of need to support access arrangements
- liaise with teaching staff to gather evidence of normal way of working
- gather signed data protection notices from candidates where required
- apply for approval through Access arrangements online (AAO), where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
- keep relevant evidence on file for JCQ inspection purposes
- liaise with the EO regarding exam time arrangements for access arrangement candidates
- ensure staff appointed to facilitate access arrangements for candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular access arrangement(s)

- provide and annually review a centre policy for the use of word processors in exams and assessments

SLT, AH, Teaching staff will:

- support the SENCo in determining and implementing appropriate access arrangements

Internal assessment

The head of centre will ensure:

- a procedure is in place for a candidate (or parent/carer) to appeal against an internal assessment decision
- a policy for the management of controlled assessment is in place and followed by centre staff
- both are available for JCQ inspection purposes
- irregularities are investigated and any cases of suspected malpractice reported to the awarding body, as required

SLT will ensure:

- teaching staff have the necessary and appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills, and training to set, conduct, mark and authenticate candidates' work
- a process of internal moderation and standardisation is in place

AHTL will ensure:

- teaching staff delivering GCSE qualifications follow instructions for conducting controlled assessment <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/controlled-assessments/> and subject-specific information where provided by the awarding body
- teaching staff delivering GCE, Entry Level or Project qualifications follow instructions for conducting coursework <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/coursework> and subject-specific information where provided by the awarding body
- for other qualifications, teaching staff follow appropriate instructions issued by the awarding body

Teaching staff will ensure:

- appropriate instructions for conducting internal assessment are followed
- candidates are aware of JCQ or awarding body information for candidates on producing work that is internally assessed

Invigilation

The EO will:

- provide an annual training or refresher event for lead invigilators/invigilators in the conduct of exams

Invigilators will:

- attend an annual training or refresher event

Entries

The term 'entries' is used to describe entry/registration information for internally and externally assessed components, and certification of qualifications against which a result will be reported.

Estimated entries

The EO will:

- request estimated or early entry information, required by awarding bodies, from AHTL in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met

AHTL will:

- provide information requested by the EO to the internal deadline
- inform the EO immediately of any subsequent changes to information

Final entries

The EO will:

- request final entry information from AHTL in a timely manner to ensure awarding body external deadlines for submission can be met
- inform AHTL of subsequent deadlines for making changes to final entry information without charge

- confirm with AHTL final entry information that has been submitted to awarding bodies

AHTL will:

- provide information requested by the EO to the internal deadline
- inform the EO immediately, or at the very least prior to the deadlines, of any subsequent changes to final entry information which includes:
 - changes to candidate personal details
 - amendments to existing entries
 - withdrawals of existing entries
- check final entry submission information provided by the EO and confirm information is correct

Entry fees

Approved by HOE and budgeted on yearly basis

Late entries

The EO will:

- have clear entry procedures in place to minimise the risk of late entries
- charge any late or other penalty fees to departmental budgets

AHTL will:

- minimise the risk of late entries by
 - following procedures identified by the EO in relation to making final entries on time
 - meeting internal deadlines identified by the EO for making final entries

Transfer of credit

The EO will:

- provide information to relevant centre staff/candidates on transferring credit for GCE AS qualifications
- meet the awarding body deadline for requesting transfer of credit

Teaching staff will:

- identify affected candidates to the EO

Candidate statements of entry

The EO will:

- provide candidates with statements of entry for checking

Teaching staff will:

- ensure candidates check statements of entry and return any relevant confirmation required to the EO

Candidates (or parents/carers) will:

- confirm entry information is correct or notify the EO of any discrepancies

Pre-exams

Access arrangements

The SENCo will:

- allocate centre staff to facilitate access arrangements for candidates
- inform candidates of the access arrangements that are in place for their exams

Briefing candidates

The EO will:

- issue individual exam timetable information to candidates
- issue relevant JCQ information for candidates
- where relevant, issue awarding body information to candidates
- issue centre exam information to candidates which will include information on:
 - exam clashes

- arriving late for an exam
- absence or illness during exams
- equipment needed
- information about when results will be issued

Dispatch of exam scripts

The EO will

- identify and confirm arrangements for the dispatch of candidate exam scripts with the DfE 'yellow label service' or the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of the service

Estimated grades

AH will:

- ensure teaching staff provide estimated grade information to the EO to the internal deadline

The EO will:

- submit estimated grade information to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline
- keep a record to track what has been sent

Internal assessment

AHTL will ensure:

- teaching staff provide marks for internally assessed components of qualifications to the EO to the internal deadline
- teaching staff authenticate candidates' work as per awarding body requirements
- teaching staff provide required samples of work for moderation to the EO to the internal deadline

The EO will:

- submit marks and samples to awarding bodies/moderators to meet the external deadline
- keep a record to track what has been sent

Candidates will:

- authenticate their work as required by the awarding body

Invigilation

The EO will:

- deploy invigilators effectively to exam rooms throughout an exam series
- allocate invigilators to exam rooms as per the required ratios
- liaise with the SENCo regarding invigilation of access arrangement candidates

The SENCo will:

- liaise with the EO regarding invigilation of access arrangement candidates

Invigilators will:

- provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate throughout an exam series

Seating and identifying candidates in exam rooms

The EO will:

- ensure a system is in place for identifying candidates in exam rooms
- provide seating plans for exam rooms as per JCQ and awarding body requirements

Invigilators will:

- follow the system for identifying candidates provided by the EO
- seat candidates in exam rooms as instructed by the EO

Security of exam materials

The EO will:

- have a process in place to record confidential materials delivered to the centre and issued to authorised staff
- have in place a recording system to track confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential
- receive, check and securely store question papers and other exam materials as per JCQ and awarding body requirements

Reception staff will:

- follow the process to record confidential materials delivered to the centre and issued to authorised staff

Teaching staff will:

- adhere to the recording system to track confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential

Timetabling and rooming

The EO will:

- produce a centre exam timetable for each exam series
- identify and resolve candidate exam clashes
- identify exam rooms and specialist equipment requirements
- liaise with site staff to ensure exam rooms are set up as per JCQ and awarding body requirements
- liaise with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

The SENCo will:

- liaise with the EO regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

Site staff will:

- liaise with the EO to ensure exam rooms are set up as per JCQ and awarding body requirements

Transferred candidate arrangements

The EO will:

- liaise with the host or entering centre as required
- process requests to the awarding body deadline
- where relevant (for an internal candidate) inform the candidate of the arrangements that have been made for their transferred candidate arrangements

Internal exams

The EO will:

- prepare for the conduct of internal exams under external conditions
- provide a centre exam timetable of subjects and rooms
- provide seating plans for exam rooms
- request internal exam papers from teaching staff
- arrange invigilation

The SENCo will:

- liaise with teaching staff to make appropriate arrangements for access arrangement candidates

Teaching staff will:

- provide exam papers and materials to the EO
- support the SENCo in making appropriate arrangements for access arrangement candidates

Exam time

Access arrangements

The SENCo will:

- provide cover sheets for access arrangement candidates' scripts where required for particular access arrangements
- have a process in place to deal with emergency access arrangements as they arise at the time of exams
 - apply for approval through Access arrangements online (AAO) where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO

Candidate absence

The process for dealing with candidate absence from exams is:

- Telephone home and ascertain reason for absence

This is managed by:

- FLO

Invigilators will:

- ensure that confirmed absent candidates are clearly marked as such on the attendance register and seating plan

Candidates will:

- be re-charged relevant entry fees for unauthorised absence from exams

Candidate behaviour

The process for managing candidate behaviour in exam rooms is:

- Zero tolerance for disruption during exams, restorative follow-up post-exam.
- Ensure access arrangements include emotional regulation strategies such as supervised breaks and separate rooms.

This is managed by:

- Senior invigilator

SLT will:

- provide clear, supportive messaging to parents/carers about expectations and consequences.
- ensure that internal disciplinary procedures relating to behaviour are followed when appropriate

Contingency Planning for Emergencies

- Immediate assessment of the situation by the senior invigilator and SLT.
- If a candidate experiences an SEMH crisis, remove them from the exam room calmly and involve the pastoral team.
- Ensure safeguarding protocols are followed and record the incident in the exam log.
- If evacuation is required, follow the documented emergency evacuation procedure ensuring exam integrity is maintained.
- Communicate with parents/carers promptly and provide support for the candidate.
- Apply for special consideration where appropriate in line with JCQ guidance.

Candidate late arrival

The EO will:

- ensure that candidates who arrive very late for an exam are reported to the awarding body
- warn candidates that their work may not be accepted by the awarding body

Conducting exams

The head of centre will:

- ensure venues used for conducting exams meet the requirements of JCQ and awarding bodies

The EO will:

- ensure exams are conducted as per JCQ and awarding body instructions

Dispatch of exam scripts

The EO will:

- dispatch scripts as instructed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- keep appropriate records to track dispatch

Exam papers and materials

The EO will:

- organise exam question papers and associated confidential resources in date order in secure storage
- attach erratum notices received to relevant exam question paper packets
- collate attendance registers and examiner details in date order
- regularly check mail or inbox for updates from awarding bodies

Exam rooms

The head of centre will:

- ensure only approved centre staff are present in exam rooms

SLT will:

- ensure a documented emergency evacuation procedure is in place

The EO will

- ensure exam rooms are set up as instructed by JCQ and awarding bodies
- provide authorised exam materials which candidates are not expected to provide themselves
- brief invigilators on exams to be conducted on a session by session basis
- ensure invigilators and candidates are aware of the emergency evacuation procedure

Site staff will:

- ensure exam rooms are available and set up as requested by the EO
- ensure grounds or centre maintenance work does not disturb exam candidates in exam rooms
- ensure fire alarm testing does not take place during exam sessions

Invigilators will:

- conduct exams in every exam room as instructed in training/refresher and briefing sessions

Candidates will:

- be required to remain in the exam room for the full duration of the exam

Irregularities

The head of centre will:

- ensure any cases of suspected malpractice are investigated and reported to the awarding body as required

The EO will:

- provide an incident log in all exam rooms for recording any incidents or irregularities
- action any required follow-up and reports to awarding bodies

Invigilators will:

- record any incidents or irregularities on the exam room incident log (e.g. late/very late arrival, candidate or centre staff suspected malpractice, candidate illness, disruption or disturbance in the exam room, emergency evacuation)

Special consideration

The EO will:

- process appropriate requests for special consideration
- gather evidence which may need to be provided by other staff in centre or candidates
- submit to awarding bodies to the external deadline

Candidates will:

- provide appropriate evidence to support special consideration requests, where required

Internal exams

The EO will:

- brief invigilators on conducting internal exams
- return candidate scripts to teaching staff for marking

Invigilators will:

- conduct internal exams as briefed by the EO

Results and post-results

Managing results day(s)

SLT will:

- identify centre staff who will be involved in results day(s) and their role

Site staff will:

- ensure the centre is open and accessible to centre staff and candidates, as required

Accessing results

The EO / AHTL will:

- inform candidates in advance of when and how results will be released to them

- access results from awarding bodies under restricted release of results
- resolve any missing or incomplete results with awarding bodies
- provide provisional statements of results to candidates on publication of results
- provide summaries of results for relevant centre staff on publication of results

Post-results services

The EO will:

- provide information to candidates and staff on the services provided by awarding bodies and the fees charged
- publish internal deadlines for requesting the services to ensure the external deadlines can be effectively met
- provide a process to record requests for services and collect candidate informed consent and fees where relevant
- submit requests to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline
- track requests to conclusion and inform candidates and relevant centre staff of outcomes
- update centre results information, where applicable

The head of centre will:

- ensure an internal appeals procedure is available where candidates disagree with the centre decision:
 - not to support an enquiry about results
 - not to appeal against the outcome of an enquiry about results
- ensure the procedure is available for JCQ inspection

Teaching staff will:

- meet internal deadlines to request the services and gain relevant candidate informed consent
- identify the budget to which fees should be charged

Candidates will:

- meet internal deadlines to request the services
- provide informed consent and fees, where relevant

Analysis of results

Following the publication of results, the Exams Officer/HoTL will:

- provide analysis of results to appropriate centre staff
- provide results information to external organisations where required
- undertake the checking and submission of Secondary school and college performance tables information

Certificates

Certificates are provided to centres by awarding bodies after results have been confirmed. The process for issuing certificates to candidates is:

- Office staff photocopy for file and post certificates home

Candidates may:

- arrange for certificates to be collected on their behalf by providing the EO with written or email authorisation; authorised persons must provide ID evidence on collection of certificates

Unclaimed or uncollected certificates are retained for:

- Seven years

The issue and retention of certificates is managed by:

- Office staff

Review

The EO will:

- provide SLT with an overview of the exam year, highlighting what went well and what could be developed/improved in terms of exams management and administrative processes within the stages of the exam cycle

SLT will:

- work with the EO to produce a plan to action any required improvements identified in the review