

# Exams Access Arrangements Policy

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The school aims to ensure that all students have equal access to examinations and are neither advantaged, nor disadvantaged over their peers by any learning, medical or psychological difficulty they may experience. We will do this by applying the rules for Access Arrangements (AA's) as set out in the most recent JCQ guidelines, whilst helping students make the best use of any arrangement they may be granted.

## 1. Identifying student who may need an Access Arrangement

- We will use every opportunity to identify students' needs from their first contact with the School at enrolment, until the end of the autumn term.
- These opportunities include the admissions process, annual review process and external professional advice.

## 2. Implementing Access Arrangements during year as the Normal Way of Working

- Staff will receive training biannually (on a rotation with invigilation training) on both the regulations, identifying student who require an AA and how they can adapt and record their classroom practise to build a history of need and provision.
- Students are expected to use their AA throughout their time in the school, for example use a laptop in lessons if they then require its use in examinations.
- The history will be kept using JCQ's 'Form 8'.

## 3. Professional Reports

- Previous schools are requested to send any details of their history of need and provision when a request for a reference for a new student is sent.
- The Examinations Officer will chase up professional reports for students who have an identified need, or arrange for the relevant assessments as necessary.
- Educational psychologists are asked to give scores etc and a recommendation for an adjustment, but not a specific recommendation as to what the AA should be, for example do not include a specific direction for "give 25% XT" as that is our decision not theirs and to avoid confusion and potential conflict with student and families.

## 4. Record keeping

- Form 8 (lists the history of need and provision, together with how and why the decision was made to grant a particular AA) is considered the key working document, 'passport to AAs', and kept in softcopy for continual update as necessary – all reprinted prior to each exam season.

- Educational psychologists' reports to stay in students' file but cross referenced to Form 8 to avoid unnecessary duplication.

## 5. Decision Making

- The exams co-ordinator will review each Form 8 and decide on appropriate AA.
- The recommendations should be presented as an agenda item on the LT agenda so that staffing implications and any costings etc become apparent. The recommendations will be referred back to the exam co-ordinator for revision, if required, at this stage.
- Form 8 records how and why a decision has been made. All AAs agreed by Head Teacher.
- Arrangements are communicated to students via their January (and Summer) exam tts (unless contentious where an individual discussion with the student should be held).
- April – AA 'Committee' reviews any changes (either more or less favourable) and updates records.

## 6. Training Students

Additional briefing session as well as general exam assembly in Dec for all AA students:

- Explain their AA and how it was derived (i.e. the rules)
- Explain how to make best use of it
- Explain expected conduct in exam room
- Listen to any concerns they may have
- Encourage them to use weekly tests / mocks etc to practise these
- Record this as part of the History of Provision.

## 7. Appeals

If you wish to appeal the school's decision about access arrangements you should write to the Head Teacher within seven working days of the decision to request a hearing before the Appeals Panel. Please ensure that a copy of all relevant documents and your full contact details accompany your letter to the Head Teacher. Please state in your letter the outcome that you desire and all the grounds of your complaint. Please also send the Head Teacher a list of the documents which you believe to be in the school's possession and wish the Panel to see. The Head Teacher will acknowledge your request in writing within five working days.

**Convening the Panel:** The Head Teachers admin will convene the Appeals Panel as soon as reasonably practicable but the Panel will not normally sit during half terms or school holidays. The Panel will consist normally of **a minimum of three individuals** who have no detailed prior knowledge of the circumstances of the complaint. One member of the Panel shall be an **independent member**. You may ask the Head Teachers administrator to tell you who has been appointed to sit on the Panel.

**Notice of hearing:** As soon as reasonably practicable, the Head Teachers administrator will send you written notification of the date, time and place of the hearing together with brief details of the Panel members who will hear it.

## 9. Accessibility

This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

The purpose of this document is to help staff identify their responsibilities in planning and managing controlled assessment alongside other colleagues. It shows how responsibilities within GCSEs are allocated to colleagues such as teachers, assessors and the senior leadership team.

Controlled Assessment is defined as work assigned to and completed by a student during a course of study; it is evaluated as part of the student's final grade in the course and forms an element of the assessment procedures in the public examination system.

## **Outlining staff responsibilities – GCSE controlled assessment**

### **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 Curriculum Leaders to schedule controlled assessments. (It is advisable that controlled assessments be spread throughout the academic years of key stage 4).
- Map overall resource management requirements for the 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.
- Publish and regularly review an internal appeals policy for controlled assessments. (This is documented with the Centre Exams Policy and also in this document.)

### **Curriculum Leaders**

- Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.
- Ensure that at least 40% of overall assessment (controlled and/or external assessment) is taken in the exam series in which the qualification is certificated, to satisfy the terminal assessment requirement in accordance with the awarding body specification.
- Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.
- Ensure that staff in their teaching area understand the regulations relevant to their subject during controlled assessments e.g. notes allowed, timings etc.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.
- Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualize sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances in line with the awarding body specifications and control requirements.
- Inform the examinations officer in advance of the dates for controlled assignments.

- Ask the appropriate Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

### **Teaching Staff**

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication instructions for conducting controlled assessments.
- Understand and comply with the awarding body 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 students as the specification allows.
- Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, 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 of an enquiry and any subsequent appeal ensure this has been conveyed to the centre.

### **Examinations Officer**

- Enter students for individual units, whether assessed by controlled assessment, external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries.
- Enter students 'cash-in' codes for the terminal exam series.
- 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 mark sheets for teaching staff to use, and transmit information to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- On the rare occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment 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/exams office to ensure requirements for support are met.

### **Disciplinary Procedures for Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is defined as any attempt by students to gain an unfair advantage in assessments. An allegation of academic misconduct may be made by a member of staff against a student.

Academic misconduct may include though not be limited to:

- a. **Plagiarism** – Plagiarism is using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.
- b. **Falsifying or fabricating data** – Falsification or fabrication of data consists of the misrepresentation of the results of experimental work or the presentation of fictitious results.
- c. **Collusion** – Collusion involved two or more students working together, without the prior authorisation of the subject teacher, to produce the same piece of work, and then attempting to present this as entirely their own work.
- d. **Copying** – Copying is when one student copies work from another student, with or without the knowledge of the first student.
- e. **Bribery or attempted bribery** – Bribery is the paying, offering or attempted exchange of an inducement for information or material intended to advantage the recipient in an assessment.
- f. **Impersonation** – Impersonation involves one person undertaking an assessment on behalf of another. This may involve the purchase of assessment material or downloading it from a website and then attempting to present this as entirely their own work.
- g. Any other wilful deception in any element of an assessment.

A student who aids and abets a fellow student to commit academic misconduct shall be deemed to have committed academic misconduct and will be dealt with accordingly.

When a case of suspected academic misconduct has been identified the following actions will be completed.

- The teacher involved will collect the evidence and bring the matter to the attention of the Lead Practitioner (Standards). They will examine the evidence, interview the student, consult with other staff and students as appropriate and establish the nature and extent of the misconduct.
- If, as a result of this investigation, the Deputy Head Teacher and Head Teacher are satisfied that no academic misconduct has taken place, no further action will be taken against the student and the student and the subject teacher will be informed as soon as possible.
- Where the student admits to the academic misconduct, the Deputy Head Teacher will re-interview the student in the presence of the Head Teacher, make a written record of the interview and request that student sign the notes as representing an accurate record of the meeting. The Deputy Head Teacher will decide the appropriate penalty in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, taking account of the extent of the misconduct, whether wilful deception was involved and the extent to which the assessment would have contributed to the final award.
- The Deputy Head Teacher will ask the Parent(s)/carer(s) of the student to come to the school to discuss their child's misconduct and the penalty. The penalty for academic misconduct will include a disciplinary sanction and will require the student to repeat the assessment under the supervision of the Head of Faculty within a specified timeframe. Failure to comply will result in a zero mark.

## Appeals Procedure

This school is committed to ensuring that whenever its teachers assess students work; this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. However, to meet the requirements of the examination boards an internal appeals procedure is available.

An appeal may only be made against the process that produced the grade or mark to be submitted to the examination board and not against the mark or grade, i.e. where the student or his parents believe that the procedures for managing, marking, moderating and standardising coursework have not been carried out within the School Procedures. Internal marking, moderation and standardisation of coursework will always be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity.

The marks submitted to the Examination Boards are subject to further external moderation and standardisation procedures and the final mark is decided by the Chief Moderator for each subject area.

### **The Internal Appeals Procedure**

If a student believes that his work has not been treated in accordance with the procedures outlined above he may make use of the internal appeals procedure;

- Appeals should be made as soon as possible, and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in that examinations series.
- Appeals should be made in writing to the Head Teacher, who will investigate the appeal. If, for any reason the Head Teacher is not able to conduct the investigation he may appoint a Deputy Head Teacher providing they are not working within the departmental area involved in the appeal.
- The Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher (appointed in the place of the Head Teacher) will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment confirmed to the internal regulations, the requirements of the awarding body and the examinations code of practice of the QCDA. This will be done before the end of the current examination series.
- If the appeal results in a change in the mark awarded to the student or his fellow students then the relevant examination board will be informed of the change and the reasons for it.
- The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any correspondence with the examination board, any changes made to the assessment of the students work and any changes made to improve matters in future at school.

After a student's work has been assessed and moderated internally it is moderated by the examinations board to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation can change the marks awarded for internally assessed work, this is outside the control of the school and is not covered by the Internal Appeals Procedure.

If a student has concerns about external moderation, he should ask the Examinations Officer for a copy of the appeals procedure of the relevant examinations board.

**Policy approved by Governors: June 2020**

Date of next review by Governors: June 2021