



The John Fisher School
Examinations Policy
Centre No: 14719

Responsible: Governors' SLAW Committee

Next Review Date: October 2022

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PUBLIC AND INTERNAL EXAMINATIONS

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of examinations 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 policy will be reviewed every two years. This exam policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team in liaison with the school's Examinations Officer.

1. Exam responsibilities

Head of Centre (The Headteacher)

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- the Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring that all public examinations are run in accordance with latest guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ)
- the Head of Centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. (Refer to the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments)

(Please note that in this policy the term coursework refers to all forms of candidate work produced outside of the traditional examination setting and which count towards the final examination grade, e.g. ISAs, controlled assessments, non-examination assessments, art portfolios, music performances, language speaking exams, etc.)

Examinations Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and supports analysis of exam results:

- advise the Senior Leadership Team and Subject Leaders and other relevant staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards.
- oversee the production and distribution to 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.
- ensure that all examination information contained on the school website is correct and up-to-date
- consult with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- administer, in liaison with the SENDCO, 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.

- provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries
- receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- account for income and outgoings relating to all exam costs/charges
- organise the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- submit candidates' coursework marks and stores 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 SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- import/export data and marksheets for subject staff where necessary.

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 mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Adherence to deadlines for entries as set by the Examinations Officer.

SENDCo:

- Administer, in liaison with the Examinations Officer, access arrangements 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.
- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- Provision of additional support — with spelling, reading, extra time, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment — to help learners achieve their course aims.

Invigilators:

- To ensure the smooth running of all examinations at the school, and in the case of public examinations, ensure that these are carried out in accordance with the JCQ rules and regulations
- Collection of exam papers and other material from the Secure Storage Unit 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 Examinations Officer's office.

Candidates:

- Understand the JCQ rules and regulations in regard to their conduct during public examinations. (All relevant JCQ documents can be found on the John Fisher School website).
- Understand coursework regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

2. Qualifications offered

The tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Assistant Headteacher and Subject Leaders.

The tests and qualifications offered are NFER CATs tests, GCSE, BTEC, AS, A-levels and Cambridge Assessment Admissions tests. In addition, the school will also run a full schedule of internal assessments and Pre-Public Examinations for each student at various stages throughout the year.

The Subject Leaders will determine which examination board(s) each subject will use. This will be reviewed, usually annually, taking into account student needs as well as changes to assessment procedures, curriculum content and school resources.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the Assistant Headteacher, SENDCo and the Subject Leader.

- At Key Stage 3: On entry candidates reading age analysis and NFER CATs tests will be undertaken as well as baseline testing in a number of subject areas. The school will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.
- At Key Stage 4: All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.
- At Key Stage 5: Candidates will be entitled to entry for qualifications for any course on which they are enrolled on condition that they have demonstrated appropriate progress and commitment as shown in classwork, homework and all interim assessments. The school reserves the right not to enter any student(s) for public examinations at this stage should their commitment fall below expected levels.

3. Exam Series

3.1 Internal Exams

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in the school calendar.

3.2 External Public Exams

External exams and assessments are scheduled in
 November - English Language and Maths resits plus University Admission Tests
 May/June – public exams plus University Admission Tests

4. Entries and late entries

4.1 Entries:

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Leaders. Candidates, or parents/carers, cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.
- The centre does accept entries from external candidates in exceptional circumstances.

4.2 Late entries:

- Entry deadlines are circulated to Subject Leaders via email.
- Late entries are only authorised by the Examinations Officer.

5. Exam Timetables

The Examinations Officer will publish generic timetables for exams as soon as possible after final timetables are confirmed. Individual candidate timetables will be issued as soon as possible after the entry deadline.

Individual timetables for PPEs will be published and issued to students as soon as the overall timetable is confirmed and actioned.

Timetables for other internal exams will be produced and circulated by curriculum staff.

6. 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 for amendment or withdrawal with refund.

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

Exam entry fees for curriculum courses are paid by the school at the first time of sitting. Penalty fees for late entry or amendment are paid by the Centre or relevant Department as appropriate.

Fee reimbursements may be sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline, fail to sit an exam, or do not meet the necessary coursework requirements, in all cases without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Re-sit fees are paid by the candidate, unless in unusual circumstances the re-sit is authorised by the department/centre.

Fees for university admission tests (e.g. BMAT, ELAT, LNAT, STEP, AEA, Oxbridge subject aptitude tests) must be paid by the candidate.

External candidates will pay an additional £5 to cover additional administration/postage costs.

7. The Equality Act 2010, SEND and Access Arrangements

7.1 Equality Act:

- All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law. Additionally, this policy complies fully with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

7.2 Special Needs:

- Candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENDCo and educational psychologist / specialist teacher. The SENDCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENDCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

7.3 Access arrangements:

- Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENDCo. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENDCo. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENDCo with the Examinations Officer.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENDCo with the Examinations Officer.

7.4 Ensuring the exam centre is accessible:

- The Examinations Officer will ensure, in liaison with the Head of Centre that the exam areas used are accessible in order to comply with the Equality Act with regard to the physical condition of the building, including lighting and sound, obstacles, access to appropriate toilet facilities, signage, seating, etc.
- The Examinations Officer, in liaison with the SENDCo will ensure that students who are likely to require any special facilities or are likely to require additional physical assistance are planned for in advance in order to reduce embarrassment or anxiety and potential disruption for that candidate or others.

7.5 Emergency evacuation:

- The Examinations Officer must ensure that all staff, including invigilators, know what procedures are in place for disabled staff or students, in particular for those who may need assistance to leave a building and that staff and invigilators know who is responsible for responding to emergency calls.
- When evacuation and emergency procedures are being explained to students, attention is given to appropriate explanation for disabled staff and students whose arrangements may be different.

7.6 Signage:

- The Examinations Officer, in liaison with the SENDCo, will ensure that all the signs for the exam and those provided by JCQ are suitably sized and adapted to meet the needs of disabled students.

7.7 Resources:

- Where computers are being used for an exam, ensure that hardware and software have been properly adapted and tested for those who may use them, such as students with a visual or aural impairment.
- The IT Department will ensure that there are backups and alternatives in case support equipment ceases to function.

7.8 Improving the student experience:

- In addition to the above, which ensure that the examination centre is appropriate for disabled students, there are a whole range of adjustments which can be made to ensure that there is a level playing field for disabled students.
- Staff will be very familiar with making adjustments to existing exam arrangements. These are not 'concessions' for the individual students but adjustments designed to reduce/remove unfair disadvantage.

These adjustments can include:

- Modified test papers, for example enlarged print or Braille
 - Additional time
 - A reader or scribe.
 - Supervised rest breaks.
 - Different coloured scripts
 - A prompter
 - Use of a computer or other technology
 - Use of an individual room
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- After the exam has been completed, and in particular at the point of publishing and communicating results, staff will make arrangements for students to receive their results in an area/room which is accessible. Students should be able to access their results quickly and privately, with appropriate attention given to any post-result support.

8. Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre, with the assistance of the Assistant Head with responsibility for Curriculum and the Examination Officer.

In the event of abnormal circumstances affecting the running of an exam season, contingency arrangements will be published in the most appropriate way (eg by letter to parents, on the school website, via text message).

Contingency plans will be made in line with guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding bodies.

See separate Contingency Plan Policy.

9. Private candidates

Managing private (external) candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

10. Managing invigilators and exam days

10.1 Managing invigilators:

- External invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer together with the Office Manager.
- Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Office Manager. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.
- Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examinations Officer, who is also responsible for training, including safeguarding procedures.
- Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the school.

10.2 Exam days:

- The Examinations Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilators.
- Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.
- The Examinations Officer or representative will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Subject Leaders may, at the request of the Examinations Officer, be present at the start of internal examinations to assist with any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required. They 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.
- Subject teachers must not be present in an examination room during written examinations.
- Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room. Question papers may be distributed to Subject Leaders at the end of the exam session and only by the Examinations Officer.

Normal routines:

- Candidates should not be allowed into the examination room before the arrival of the invigilators. If the exam is taking place in the Hall or Gym, students should wait in the playground and not in the corridor or in the quad.
- Candidates should be called into the examination room subject-by-subject, or row-by-row, according to the seating plan, approximately five minutes before the start. Unless stated otherwise, morning exams start at 9.00am; the afternoon session commences at 1.30pm.

- All school bags, books, coats, etc. should be left outside the examination room. All candidates should be in full school uniform. All writing equipment, mathematical instruments and calculators are to be carried loose, or in a transparent pencil case or polythene bag. Candidates must be willing to demonstrate that no advantageous material is stored on their calculator. Mobile phones and watches are strictly forbidden and, if such a phone rings during the exam, we are duty bound to report it and the candidate concerned may well be disqualified.
- Candidates should cease talking as they enter the room and should sit at the desk displaying their candidate number.
- Candidates who arrive late through no fault of their own must arrive before their examination has ended, to avoid contact with other candidates. They are to be allowed the full time for the working of the paper and the situation should immediately be brought to the attention of the Examinations Officer.
- Candidates who arrive late may be admitted up to an hour after the start of the exam. After that time, such candidates may only be permitted to commence their exam at the discretion of the Examinations Officer.
- Under no circumstances are candidates to leave their desks during an examination without permission. Hands should be raised if there is any need to communicate with an invigilator. Invigilators should not assist candidates in the answering of an examination question, or in the interpretation of an examination question.
- Candidates who need to leave the examination room to go to the lavatory or in the case of illness must be accompanied by an invigilator. Candidates who recover sufficiently to return to the examination may be permitted to do so and may be allowed the full time prescribed for the working of the paper.
- All emergencies must be dealt with sympathetically, care being taken to safeguard the interests of the majority of candidates and to avoid compromising the validity of the examination. If any emergency arises, the invigilators may summon extra assistance by using the telephone in the Gym office. All emergencies and incidents must be reported to the Examinations Officer or to his/her assistant immediately. This is particularly important if malpractice is suspected.
- Candidates should not borrow equipment from other candidates.
- Candidates are permitted to bring a transparent bottle of water into the examination room on condition that they remove all labelling and keep the bottle under their desk.
- Candidates should be under close supervision at all times. Invigilators should be as quiet as possible and should use the time when giving out extra paper to patrol and supervise conduct. On entering the examination room invigilators should make themselves familiar with the type of stationery being used for each particular exam.
- Completion times will be written up on the whiteboard at the front of the examination room. Some pupils with Access Arrangements may have up to 50% extra time; this information can be found on the seating plan for the exam. At the end of the exam, candidates should stop writing when requested to do so.
- Candidates should be dismissed a row at a time, only after the collection of the scripts, and should leave the room in silence and should remain silent until reaching the playground.

- Scripts should be checked to see that they are in the right order and should then be placed in the envelope provided, along with the attendance register. This envelope should then be given to the examination officer or, in the event of his/her unavailability, after sealing, should be taken directly to the General Office. On no account must this envelope be left unattended anywhere.
- After the departure of the candidates, question papers, excess writing paper, candidate number cards, etc. should be collected from the desks. After the last exam in any session, the windows should be closed and the examination room locked.
- All public examinations begin after a prayer.

11. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

11.1 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.
- The Examinations Officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and consider their case in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

11.2 Clash candidates:

- The Examinations Officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying a secure venue for supervision within the centre; for arranging re-timetabling and appropriate supervision of candidates; and for arranging overnight supervisions if required. Clash candidates will be informed of arrangements made, and JCQ will be made aware of any overnight supervision using the appropriate form.

11.3 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 be otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the Examinations Officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.
- Where necessary, the candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam.
- The Examinations Officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the last exam in the affected subject(s).

12. Coursework, controlled assessments, non-examination assessments and appeals against internal assessments

12.1 Coursework/Controlled assessments/non-examination assessments:

- Candidates who have to prepare coursework/controlled assessments/non-examination assessments should do so by the end of the specified date.
- Subject Leaders will ensure all coursework/controlled assessments/non-examination assessments marks are entered onto Exam Board websites and samples are ready for despatch at the correct time.

12.2 Appeals against internal assessments:

The centre has a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the Examinations Officer. 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 assessments/non-examination assessments have been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- appeals should be made in writing to the Head of Centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the Head of Centre findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

13. Malpractice

The Head of Centre in consultation with the Examinations Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

14. Results and Post Result Services

14.1 Results:

- Candidates will receive individual result statements on results days, either in person at the centre or by post to their home
- Results may only be collected by third parties on behalf of a candidate if they have been authorised to do so by the candidate in writing or by email.
- Under exceptional circumstances, results will be sent by email, but this is not guaranteed on result day itself. Results will not be given out over the telephone.
- 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 in liaison with the Office Manager.

14.2 Enquiries about Results EARs:

- EARs may be requested by Examinations Officer in liaison with Subject Leaders, or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.
- If a result is queried, the Examinations Officer and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense. When the centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may appeal this decision. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

14.3 Access to Scripts ATS

- After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return or a copy of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.
- Subject Leaders may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the written consent of candidates must be obtained.

15. Certificates

- Certificates are presented in person and must be signed for.
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.
- The centre has a responsibility to retain any uncollected certificates for one year only. After one year, certificates may be securely destroyed. A record of these certificates should be kept for four years.
- Candidates who require replacement certificates will be directed to contact the relevant exam board. The exam board may not be able to issue a replacement certificate, in which case a Statement of Results can be requested. There is a charge for this service. A transcript of results may be issued by the school.