



Tytherington
High School and Specialist Science College

Exams Policy

This policy was agreed at the Committee A Meeting (Minute No. 6 of the School's Governing Body Curriculum and Performance Management/Pupil Achievement Committee Meeting) held on 10 March 2011.

Policy Review:

March 2013

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The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams 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 exam policy will be reviewed every two years.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre, Head of Sixth Form, Heads of Department, Senior Leadership Team, Exams Officer and the Business Manager.

1. Exam responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- 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*.

Exams Officer

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

- advises 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
- consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- administers 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*

- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- line manages the exams assistant who organises the recruitment, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams who have been trained by the exams officer.
- prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made
- submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Deputy Head

Organisation of teaching and learning.

- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

Heads of Department

- 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.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

Head of Careers

- Guidance and careers information.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to heads of department.

Director of Inclusion

- 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

- 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.

Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Administrative staff

- Support for the input of data.
- Posting of exam papers.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the head of centre, deputy head, heads of department and the senior leadership team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, AS and A2 levels, GCE Applied, BTEC, NVQ, City & Guilds, GNVQ.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed immediately.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in December, April, May and June.

External exams are scheduled in November, January, March, May and June.

All internal exams are held under exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the heads of department and the senior leadership team.

3.2 Timetables

The exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams once these are confirmed.

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of department and the subject teachers. In exceptional cases of non-entry there will be consultation with the Leadership Team and the Headteacher.

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

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via E-mail, weekly bulletin and exams notice board.

Late entries are authorised by heads of sixth form, heads of key stage, heads of department and exams officer.

4.3 Retakes

Candidates are allowed retakes in GCSE Maths and English.
Candidates are allowed 2 retakes per subject in AS.
Candidates are allowed 2 retakes per subject in A2.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers and the heads of department.

(See also section 5: Exam fees)

5. Exam fees

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

AS initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre on condition that students meet sixth form attendance criteria.

A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre on condition that students meet sixth form attendance criteria.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments.

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

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

Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates.

(See also section 4.3: Retakes)

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.

(See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements

6.1 DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

6.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO.

The SENCO 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 SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCO.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO with the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the exams officer.

7. Estimated grades

Estimated grades

The heads of department will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for external exams.

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

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

CRB 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.

8.2 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 is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

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

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates 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 heads of department/faculty at the end of the exam session.

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 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 exams officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

9.2 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

9.3 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 candidate's 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 officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

10. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments/gradings for vocational courses

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Heads of department will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers and the heads of department.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure (**see letter at Appendix 1**) on this subject, which is available from the exams office.

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 has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification

- appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the head of centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

10.3 Internal Appeals Procedures for Vocational Courses

If a candidate is not happy with the grade they have been given for an assignment, they will be advised to see the tutor who set and marked the piece of work in the first instance. NB, students will be notified of these procedures and rights in the BTEC student handbook issues at the start of a course.

The tutor will carry out the following steps:

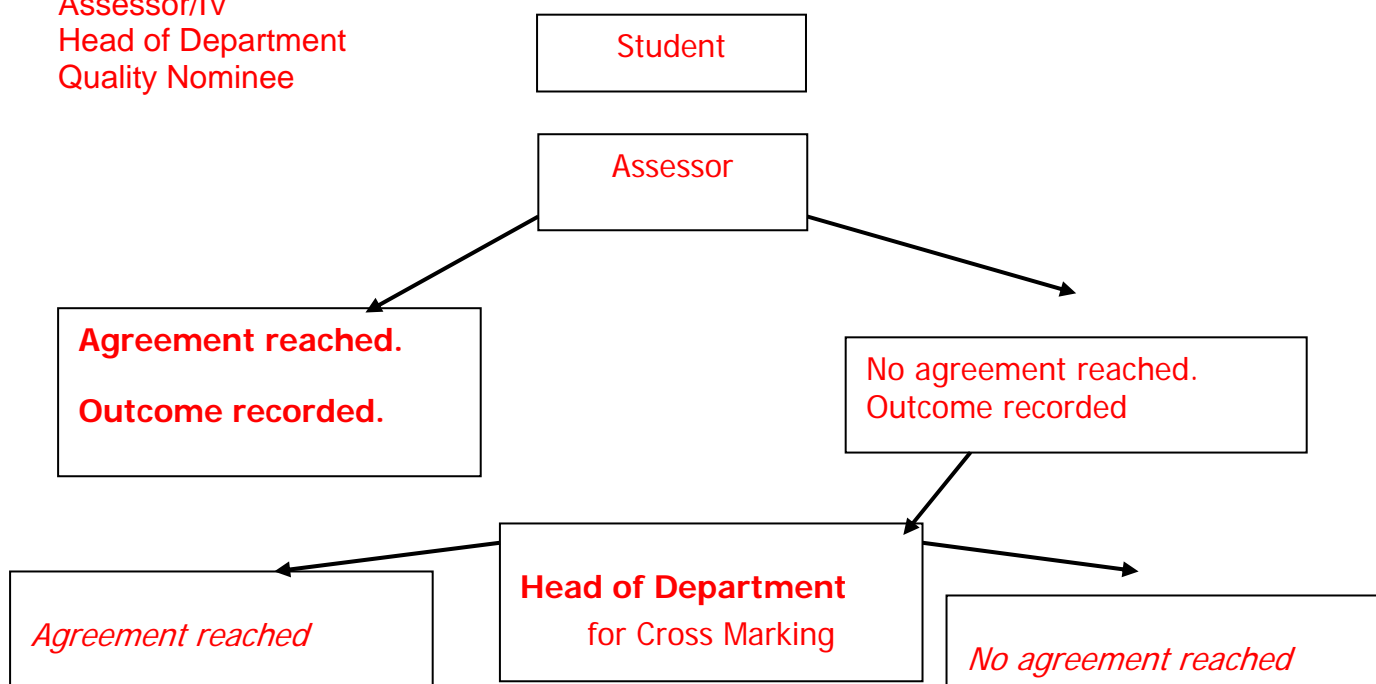
- Discuss the issue with the student;
- Review the work and the mark awarded;
- Give further constructive feedback.
- Have the work internally verified

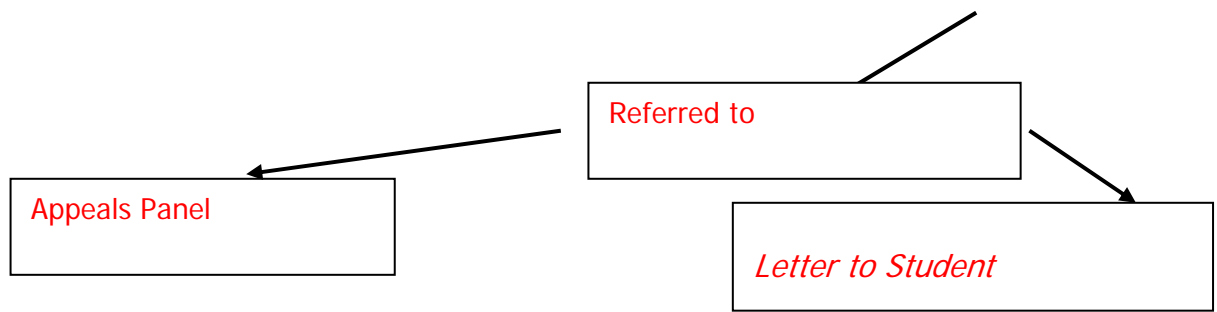
If, at this stage if the student is still not happy, contact the Head of Department who will arrange for the assignment to be cross-marked.

If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome, the matter will be referred to the Quality Nominee who will arrange an Appeals Panel meeting.

This vocational appeals panel will consist of:

Student
Assessor/IV
Head of Department
Quality Nominee





Edexcel and OCR stress that all appeals must be fully documented by the quality assurance co-ordinator and made available to the external verifier

Further information on the Edexcel and OCR appeals procedures can be found on

www.Edexcel.org.uk

www.OCR.org.uk

11. Incidents of plagiarism/suspected plagiarism in vocational courses

Students will be required to sign to say that assessed work, which contributes to a module or final grade assessment, is their own work. The sanctions applied to a candidate committing plagiarism range from warnings regarding future conduct to the candidate being barred from entering one or more examinations for a set period of time and the achievement of high grades on assignments.

In the case of plagiarism of any form Edexcel / OCR will be contacted and guidance followed.

Students will be referred to the Head of Department and Quality Nominee.

12. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

12.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre / by post to their home addresses (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 exams officer.

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

12.2 EARs

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

(See section 5: Exam fees)

12.3 ATS

After the release of results, candidates may consult subject staff to request the return of papers via the exams office within five days' scrutiny of the results.

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

13. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person and collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised in writing to do so.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for two years.

14. Appeals Procedures

14.1 Internal assessment appeals procedures

Appeals may be made to the School regarding the procedures used in internal assessment, but not against the actual marks or grades submitted by the School for moderation by the Awarding Body.

A pupil or parent wishing to appeal against the procedures used in internal assessments should contact the Examinations Officer as soon as possible to discuss the appeal, and a written appeal must be received by the School before the end of the exam season in

question. In the summer, for example, the appeal must be lodged in sufficient time for the matter to be dealt with before the end of the Summer term, but should in reality be lodged much earlier.

On receipt of a written appeal, an enquiry into the internal assessment will be conducted by the Examinations Officer, the Head of Department and a member of the Leadership Team linked to the Department who is not involved with the internal assessment decision.

This enquiry will consider whether the procedures used in the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the Awarding Body.

The School would encourage the candidate to be supported by a parent, guardian, or friend in the presentation of their case. The appeal decision will be recorded and filed.

The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including details of any relevant communication with the Awarding Body and of any steps taken further to protect the interests of the candidate(s).

14.2 External assessment appeals procedures

This applies to GCSE and GCE work that is assessed externally. In general it relates therefore to written papers, and also the few pieces of coursework that are wholly assessed externally. The procedure is outlined in the letter at Appendix 2).

Any appeal must be made through the School; submissions will *not* be accepted from individuals. The final arbiter is the Examinations Appeals Board (EAB).

Head of centre

Mr R A Robinson

Exams officer

Mrs L Proctor

Date

10 March 2011



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Ash



Elm

Appendix 1

Internal Assessment Appeals Procedure

This applies to GCSE and GCE coursework, performance etc providing the work is assessed internally.

If at any stage during your exam courses you have concerns about the procedures used in assessing your internally marked work for public exams (e.g. coursework / portfolio / projects), then you **MUST** initially discuss this with your tutor, the teacher concerned, and/or the relevant Head of Department. Hopefully this will resolve the issue.

If the matter is not resolved then you should see the Examinations Officer as soon as possible to discuss whether a formal appeal could be made. Any appeal is very much a last resort, and a request for an appeal will not be accepted unless these other avenues have first been explored. It is expected that appeals will be extremely rare.

An appeal would be very weak if you have not kept to the agreed deadlines (unless this is what the appeal is about), or you have not tried to sort it out within a fortnight of the problem arising. You may not appeal against any mark that has been awarded unless you think that this has been because of a procedural error, and you must be able to identify the procedural error.

In accordance with the Code of Practice for the conduct of examinations, Tytherington High School and Specialist Science College is committed to ensuring that:

- internal assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills.
- assessment evidence provided by candidates has been produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the specification.
- the consistency of internal assessment is secured through internal standardisation.
- staff responsible for standardisation have been properly trained.
- the School will comply fully with the Joint Council guidelines.

Appeals may be made to the School regarding the procedures used in internal assessment, but not against the actual marks or grades submitted by the School for moderation by the Awarding Body.

A pupil or parent wishing to appeal against the procedures used in internal assessments should contact the Examinations Officer as soon as possible to discuss the appeal, and a written appeal must be received by the School before the end of the exam season in question. In the summer, for example, the appeal must be lodged in sufficient time for the matter to be dealt with before the end of the Summer term, but should in reality be lodged much earlier.

On receipt of a written appeal, an enquiry into the internal assessment will be conducted by the Examinations Officer, the Head of Department and a member of the Leadership Group linked to the Department who is not involved with the internal assessment decision.

This enquiry will consider whether the procedures used in the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the Awarding Body.

The School would encourage the candidate to be supported by a parent, guardian, or friend in the presentation of their case. The appeal decision will be recorded and filed.

The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including details of any relevant communication with the Awarding Body and of any steps taken further to protect the interests of the candidate(s).

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Appendix 2

External Assessment Appeals Procedure

This applies to GCSE and GCE work that is assessed externally. In general it relates therefore to written papers, and also the few pieces of coursework that are wholly assessed externally.

It is possible to appeal against the *procedures* of an Exams Board in the conduct of an examination.

This is *not* to be confused with making a Result Enquiry, querying a mark. The routine for this can be found here. It is not possible to appeal against the outcome of Result Enquiry unless there is evidence that the exam board was not adhering to the Code of Practice.

An appeal might be against the inappropriate application of a mark scheme, or perhaps against a change in specification without properly making it known. In each case the school would need to look very carefully at the Code of Practice, to see if there has been a procedural error. The process is long winded, and probably has to go through all three stages before success is likely. The final conclusion may be 6 months after the exam results are published, by which time any changes in marks will be far too late for University purposes. *Making an appeal is very rare.*

Any appeal must be made through the School; submissions will *not* be accepted from individuals. The final arbiter is the Examinations Appeals Board (EAB).

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