

Buile Hill Visual Arts College

Examinations Policy

2017 - 2018

The Policy Purpose

The purpose of this exams policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests 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.

The exam policy will be reviewed annually.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre, Deputy Head, Head of Departments, Senior Leadership Team and the Examinations Officer.

Exam Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Having overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre.
- Advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice.
Refer to the JCQ document – Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

Examinations Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal examinations.

- Advises the senior leadership team, Head of Departments, Subject and Class Tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- 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 with SENCo and makes applications for special consideration using JCQ publications for access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Line manages the senior exam invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- 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/remark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Deputy Head

- Organises teaching and learning.
- Manages external validation of courses followed at key stage 4/post 16.

Pastoral Manager

- Guidance and pastoral overview of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Guidance and supervision of candidates entering and leaving examination rooms.

Heads of Department / Director of Curriculum

- Guidance and subject overview 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 out by the exams officer.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangement requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Submission of candidates' names to heads of department.

The Sen Coordinator SENCo

- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.

- Application of access arrangements on-line and report details to exam board and exams officer.
- 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.

Attendance Officer

- Contact candidates/parents absent from start of exam, informed by exams officer or pastoral manager.
- Distribution of holiday request forms to appropriate candidates.
- Year 11 attendance registers.

Invigilators

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Distribution of equipment required by candidates.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.
- Prepare exam papers for dispatch.

Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries by candidates/parents.
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- Accessible behaviour in an examination room.
- Follow the rules and regulations set out by JCQ for examinations.

Qualifications

Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Heads of Departments and Senior Leadership Team.

The qualifications offered are GCSE Full and Short Courses, IGCSE, AS Level, Functional Skills, ECDL, BTEC & V-Cert.

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

Informing the examinations office of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the Heads of Departments and Senior Leadership Team.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consideration with the Candidate, Parents/Carers and SENCo.

Exam Series and Timetables

Exam Seasons

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled on demand. Year 11 internal mock exams will take place throughout the year depending on which subject. Year 10 internal mock exams take place throughout the year also.

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

Mock exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Head of Department decides which exam series are used in the centre.

On-demand tests can be scheduled only in windows agreed between Exams Office and SLT.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exams timetable for Internal exams and External exams.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of Departments.

Candidates or parents/ carers can request a subject entry change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does accept entries from external candidates who live in the Salford community.

The centre may act as an exam centre for other organisations if requested.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via Exams Policy, Notice Board and Internal Post/Pigeon hole. *Appendix 1*.

Late entries are authorised by Senior Leadership Team and Exams Officer. A late entry/amendment form must be completed and signed by Head of Department.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with Candidates, Exams Officer, Heads of Department and Senior Leadership Team.

Exam Fees

Candidates or departments must follow the appropriate procedures for changes of tier or withdrawals. No fees will occur provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies. *Appendix 1.*

Entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

External exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Departments, Centre and Candidates. A late entry/amendment form must be completed and signed by Head of Department.

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

Re-Sit Fees

The school will pay for one timetabled exam sitting per candidate. Departments can enter candidates for a re-sit, with department responsible for paying appropriate fees. Head of Department and Deputy Head to discuss re-sit opportunities for candidates on C/D borderline, school to pay appropriate fee.

Holiday/Extended Leave

Candidate/Parents planning holiday must complete an 'Application for Absence from School' form. The form is returned to the Attendance Officer.

The Examinations Officer will consider future examination dates once the form is authorised by the Head Teacher.

Candidates absent from an exam due to unauthorised absence will reimburse the school the appropriate exam fee.

Disability Discrimination Act

All exam centre staff must ensure that meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 replaced nine major Acts of Parliament.

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

The definition of disability come under the Equality Act 2010 'if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

The centre will not discriminate against a candidate on the grounds of their disability, regardless of whether the candidate considers that they have a disability.

Ensuring that the exam centre is accessible.

Exam centres are required to be accessible to both internal and external students in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

The Building

- The entrances to the centre and corridors approaching the exam rooms are well lit.
- Lighting is to be checked for suitability both during the day and in the evenings.
- Lighting is evenly distributed, ensuring that it doesn't not cause glare and/shadows. (This is particular important for people with a visual impairment or with perceptual difficulties)
- Ensure that there is no lighting which may trigger seizures for those students with epilepsy.
- The use of tactile surfaces to highlight any steps, stairways or changes in level.
- Make sure that any obstacles are removed from corridors and that there is safe access and exit routes through corridors in order to meet the health and safety duty to staff and students, and in particular people with mobility impairments including wheelchair users.
- If at all possible, try to arrange exam rooms on the ground floor of buildings, and at the very least ensure that they are located near emergency exits.
- Where a private room has been arranged for an exam, check that the environment is suitable for the student. For example, is there enough room for a wheelchair and its supports? Is the decoration likely to result in discomfort or hyper nervous stimulation if the student has autism?
- Ensure that those who need to take medication during the course of an exam can do so in privacy and as speedily as possible.
- Try to arrange exam rooms which are close to accessible toilet. Be aware that many students may need adult changing facilities in the accessible toilet.
- Lighting in toilets is adjustable as this is essential for students who are deaf or blind.
- There is also a facility to open the door in accessible toilet from the outside in case of an emergency.
- Ensure that all staff and students, including disabled students and staff, are aware of the emergency evacuation procedures to ensure that disability students can be safely evacuated from the building whatever their impairment.

Seating

- If you know that a student may become unwell during the exam because of the nature of their disability, try to ensure that you seat them close to the exits to make them feel more comfortable and to limit disruption for others.
- Make sure that there is sufficient space between desks and chairs to enable a student (or invigilator) that uses a wheelchair to enter and leave the area without difficulty.
- Make sure that there are chairs available outside exam rooms to enable those with mobility issues or those who may simply be experiencing particular stress to sit and rest before they enter the exam.
- Ensure that seating is appropriate and comfortable for those who may have a disability that affects seating and posture.

Signage

- Make sure that all the signs for the exam and those provided by JCQ are suitably sized and adapted to meet the needs of disabled students.
- Sign content should be simple, short and easily understood.
- Text and lettering should be in a clear, uncomplicated and reasonably sized font (12pt).
- The style, wording and design of signs should be consistent throughout the exam centre. This will help students to easily recognise signs as they move around the building.
- Signage should combine raised text, pictorial symbols, arrows and Braille.
- Braille signs should have a small tactile arrow on the left side.
- The colour of signs should contrast with the colour of the walls.
- Signage should be placed at consistent heights.
- Make sure that signs that identify exam rooms are situated on the wall in case the door is open when a student needs to see the sign.
- Floor plans should be placed at main entrance and at designated areas within buildings, such as outside lifts and close to stairways. These should have easily distinguishable symbols to locate areas and should include instructions for visually impaired students to enable them to locate lifts, staircases, accessible toilets and exam rooms.

Emergency Evacuation

- Ensure that all staff including invigilators know the procedures that are in place for disabled staff or students, in particular for those who may need assistance to leave a building.
- Procedure should be in place so that staff and invigilators know who is responsible for responding to emergency calls.

- Make sure that when evacuation and emergency procedures are being explained to student, attention is given to appropriate explanation for disabled staff and students whose arrangements may be different.
- Fire alarms that have both aural and visual alerts should be installed. Consider making arrangements for a flashing visual alarm and/or a handheld vibrating alarm.
- Pictorial symbols should be included on all fire evacuation signs. This will help people with learning difficulties, people with dementia and people who have difficulty reading English.
- All fire exit signs should indicate which exits are suitable for wheelchair users.
- Ensure that all ground floor exits are level and are accessible to wheelchair users.
- Make sure that staff are aware of where any 'evacuation' chairs are and that the chairs are located at identifiable points. All staff should be trained in using them.

Resources

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

Improving the Student Experience

In addition to the above practical steps, ensure that the 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. Examination office staff will be very familiar with making adjustments to existing examination arrangements. These are not 'concessions' for the individual students but adjustments designed to reduce/remove unfair disadvantage.

The adjustments include;

- Modified test papers, for example enlarged print or Braille
- Up to 25% extra time (or considerably more depending on the nature of a students' disability)
- A reader or a scribe. Be sensitive to the fact that many people, for example those with autism, will find it hard to relate to someone who is a stranger. Take steps to introduce these support workers to students before the exam. This is only available to students who already have support.
- Supervised rest breaks. Students with hyperactivity or obsessive compulsive disorders may need opportunities to take a break and rest during an exam. This impairment or long-term conditions such as cancer. Try to ensure that these rest areas are suitably comfortable whilst still remaining secure for the purposes of the exam process.
- Different colour scripts/overlays.

- Use of a bilingual dictionary.
- A prompter. In some cases where a student may have difficulty with time, for example a student with autism, a prompter will be able to assist the student to move on and not become fixated with particular question at the expense of the whole paper. It is important that prompters are aware of disability etiquette, particularly if they may need to touch a desk to prompt.
- Use of a computer.
- Use of an individual, late and behavioural room.

After the examination has been completed and in particular at the point of publishing and communicating results, examinations office staff need to 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 post-results support.

In cases where there needs to be overnight supervision, be sensitive to issues of support and dietary requirements.

Be sensitive when accompanying a disabled student to an accessible toilet and be aware of the possibility that a support staff member may need to assist them.

Disclosure

There is nothing in the Equality Act which says that a student has to disclose their disability. Consequently, in some instances, if a centre does not know and could not reasonably be expected to know that the individual is disabled, then the centre does not have a duty to make an adjustment for a disabled person.

The centre will meet the requirements of the Equality Act by ensuring that the examination centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team, Examinations Officer and Health and Safety Advisor.

Access Arrangements

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special education needs who are embarking on a course leading to an examination, and the date of that exam. The SENCo can 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 and Educational psychologist/Specialist Teacher.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of both the SENCo and Examinations Officer.

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 alongside the Examinations Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCo with the Examinations Officer.

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for examination administration is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

Private Candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

Estimated Grades

Heads of Departments are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Examinations Officer when requested by the Examinations Officer.

Invigilators

Managing Invigilators

Support staff and External staff are used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for Internal and External examinations.

Invigilators will attend annual training sessions and complete a confidentially form. A4 copies of the JCQ 'Instructions for conducting examinations' will be made available to all invigilators.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer and Senior Leadership Team.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer and SLT.

CRB fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examinations Officer.

Invigilators rates of pay are set by the centre.

Malpractice

The head of the centre must report to the awarding body as soon as possible all cases of suspected malpractice in connection with the examination. (pg.38 JCQ ICE booklet). The head of the centre has a duty to monitor and report potential malpractice by invigilators and centre staff to the awarding body as soon as possible.

Examination Day

The Examinations Officer will book all examination rooms after liaison with other users and make the question paper, other examination stationary and materials available for the invigilators.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The exams officer/lead invigilator or Heads of Departments will start all examinations in accordance with the JCQ guidelines.

The head of department may be present at the start of an examination to assist with identification of candidates, they must then leave the examination room.

In practical examinations subject teachers may be on hand in case of technical difficulties.

Examination 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 Departments after the awarding body's published finishing time for the exam or, in the case of timetable variations, until all candidates within the centre have completed the examination.

Candidates

All candidates are informed of the JCQ examination regulations/guidelines in the form of an examination pack prior to the start of the examination series. The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones/iwatches and other electronic devices apply at all times.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Candidates must sign in and out of school on the attendance registers provided.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full examination time at the discretion of the examinations officer or senior invigilator.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

The Examinations Officer will report absent candidates to the Attendance Officer who will try and contact the candidate/parent.

For candidates with an examination clash, the supervision of escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Deputy Head Teacher and the Examinations Officer.

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the examinations officer, or the examination invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the examination for example by providing a letter from candidate's doctor. The examinations officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Coursework

It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all internal assessment/coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time. The examination officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks and Appeals

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by the Heads of Departments.

Appeals against Internal Assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is to be made in writing to the Examinations Officer to investigate and action.

Heads of Departments will ensure all appropriate departmental staff is made aware of the Controlled Assessment policy. Heads of Departments will sign as received.

Results and Enquiries about Results

Results, Enquiries about Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results day (23rd August 2018, between 10am-12pm), either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide self-addressed envelope).

Arrangements for the centre 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.

EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidates consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the examinations officer, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark. The Head of Centre will make the decision of persons responsible for paying appropriate fees.

When the centre does not support a candidate's or parent's request for 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 three days' of the issued results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained and the departments to pay the appropriate fees.

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

V-Cert Appeals and Enquires

For enquiries about internal and external assessment results or grades you need to complete 'enquiry about a result form' which is available on the website: ncfe.org.uk or on request from the centre support team.

For appeals a report needs submitting together with supporting evidence including the following;

- Centre name, address and number
- Candidates name and NCFE registration number
- Date you or the candidate received notification of NCFE's decision
- Title and number of the NCFE programme affected or nature of service affected
- Full nature of appeal
- Contents and outcome of any investigation carried out by you or the candidate relating to the issue
- Date of the report and the appellant's name, position and signature

The above needs to be emailed posted or faxed to the Centre Support Team as soon as possible and at the latest within 30 working days from the date of the original decision.

ECDL Qualification Appeals

The centre can appeal any decision made by BCS and have 20 days from the date notified of the decision. If the centre is not able to resolve an appeal then the learner has the right to submit an appeal directly to BCS. Learner appeals must be made within 20 days of the date of assessment and will incur a fee of £10. This fee will be refunded if the learners result improves following the appeal. Appeals should be sent to qualifications@bcs.uk.

Certificates

Certificates are presented to each student at awards evening, which will be arranged each year for in the month of November/December.

Certificates are presented in person and collected and signed for.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so and have a signed letter by the candidate confirming this.

The centre retains certificates for Five years.

Ex pupils, in the case of lost/unavailable certificates: On request by a candidate the examinations officer/data manager will produce a school statement of examination results to the fee of £10.

Head of Centre

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Examinations Officer

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