



MERCHANT
TAYLORS'
SCHOOLS

For Boys and Girls
aged 4 to 18 years

Examinations and Controlled Assessment Policy

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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 annually.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the exams officer.

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 Management 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
- prepares and presents reports to the SMT 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 SMT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Administration of access arrangements

Deputy head Academic

- 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.

Head of Learning Support

- 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.

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, heads of curriculum, heads of department and the Senior Management Team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE and A levels.

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 by 19/11/2013.

At key stage 3

All candidates will take English, mathematics and science .

Decisions on whether candidates should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, Head of Learning Support, subject teachers and the deputy head.

At key stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

At post-16

It is expected that AS modules will be completed during year 12 but not certificated until year 13

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in January.

External exams are scheduled in June, with very few exceptions in November and January.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the heads of department.

3.2 Timetables

The exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal 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.

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

The centre does accept entries from external candidates.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email and notice board.

Late entries are authorised by heads of department and exams officer.

4.3 Retakes

Candidates are not allowed retakes in GCSE, unless authorised by the Headmaster.

Candidates are allowed retakes in AS.

Candidates are allowed retakes in A2.

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers and the exams officer.

(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.

A2 initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre.

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 Head of Learning Support and an educational psychologist or suitable qualified clinician.

The Head of Learning Support 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 Head of Learning Support 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 Head of Learning Support and the exams officer.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Head of Learning Support with the exams officer, taking into account wheelchair access etc.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Head of Learning Support with the exams officer. The school is able to provide access for a range of disabilities. These include:

| Impairment or Disability | Access provided |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Visual impairment or poor eyesight | Well-lit alternative exam room |
| Poor mobility | Provision of practical assistant |
| Wheelchair access | Alternative access avoiding steps |
| Hearing impairment | Quiet alternative exam room |

This list is not exclusive and any reasonable adjustments required by a candidate will be applied.

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

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams officer and Assistant Head Operations.

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.

The exam officer / caretakers are 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 at the end of the exam session.

9. Emergencies

9.1 Procedure for the emergency evacuation of the exam room

An emergency evacuation procedure poster will be displayed in each exam room (see appendix B)

The signal for the emergency evacuation of the exam room will be the sounding of the Fire Alarm. Candidates will leave the exam room in single file, those nearest the door leading, and go at walking pace via the nearest exit to the Assembly Point on the school field.

The invigilator must make sure that all question papers and scripts are left in the examination room and that the candidates are supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure that there is no discussion about the examination.

The invigilator should make a note of the interruption and how long it lasted and allow the full working time set for the examination. If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.

The examinations officer should make a full report of the incident and of the action taken, and retain on file until the relevant date for Enquiries about results.

For on-line tests, centres should refer to any software specific instructions to safeguard the security of assessment content. Procedures for hardware, software and communication failures should allow candidates to continue at another workstation or at a later time. The invigilator should control the re-start, re-set the timing where necessary and ensure that the candidates can re-access their previous responses where this is technically feasible.

Where the integrity of the examination or the candidates' performance may have been affected, the examinations officer must send a report to the appropriate awarding body.

10. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

10.1 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.

10.2 Clash candidates

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

10.3 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.

Candidates requiring special consideration during examinations will be given appropriate support by the exams officer and Head of Learning Support. Rooming for these candidates will be organised as appropriate to their access needs on the day of the examination ie wheelchair access, use of a scribe or word processor etc.

11. Controlled Assessment and appeals against internal assessments

11.1 Controlled Assessment

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 controlled assessment 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 heads of department.

11.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office and appears as Appendix A at the back of this policy.

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.

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. Results will not be given out by phone and any results not collected by lunchtime will be posted home or to an alternative address, if the candidate has informed the exam office before the end of term.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the exams officer.

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 ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three 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 will not be posted.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been

authorised to do so.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for three years.

Appendix A

14. Procedure for Appeals Relating to Internal Assessment Decisions

Candidates have a right to appeal against any impropriety with regard to the procedures used in internal assessments for public examinations. The appeal must come in the form of a written request from the parent to the Headmaster, setting out the grounds for concern.

1. The Headmaster will appoint a panel consisting of a Head of Department not involved in the original process, a School Governor as an independent member and himself or the Deputy Head (Academic) (acting as 'Head of Centre').
2. The panel will examine the evidence for the procedures used in the assessment, decide upon their appropriateness and determine whether or not they have been properly followed.
3. The panel's findings will be formally reported back to the parent.
4. Records of the request for appeal, of the evidence and deliberations of the panel will be kept by the Headmaster's Office.



Emergency Evacuation Procedure During Examinations

Any person discovering a FIRE or hearing the alarm before the start of an examination should:

- Firstly sound the nearest Fire alarm
- If practicable report FIRE location to the Exam Officer or member of the Invigilation staff
 - Proceed as the normal FIRE DRILL

On hearing the FIRE ALARM whilst in an Examination Room:

1. Stop writing.
2. Listen to the instruction from your Invigilators. Stay with your group and leave immediately in a sensible manner, using the nearest FIRE EXIT
3. It is important that you do not talk or discuss the examination in progress with your fellow candidates
4. Proceed to the FIRE ASSEMBLY POINT on the school field and wait in silence with your invigilation staff.
5. Do not re-enter the building until you are advised by your Invigilators
6. Walk in silence to the Examination Room and return to your allocated seat number
7. The examination will continue with the rest of your allotted time.

14. Controlled Assessment Policy

Policy on management of Controlled Assessment

Outlining staff responsibilities - GCSE controlled assessment

Senior Management 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 heads of department/subject 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
- Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for controlled assessments.

Heads of department

- 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 individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.

- 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 awarding body specifications and control requirements.

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 that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.

- Ask the appropriate special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

Exams 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 collect and send mark sheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- On the few 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 to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

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Head of centre

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Exams officer



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Date 26.09.2014

The policy is next due for review on 26.09.15