



BALLYMENA ACADEMY

EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS ASSESSMENT POLICY

November, 2023

Introduction

Ballymena Academy is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently and in compliance with the following published JCQ regulations and Awarding Authority requirements:-

- General Regulations for Approved Centres
- Instructions for Conducting Examinations
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments and those for conducting coursework
- A guide to the special consideration process
- AI Use in Assessments:
 - Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
- Plagiarism in Assessment – Guidance for Teachers/Assessors
- JCQ Information for Candidates – coursework/controlled assessment
- Invigilation guidance

and related school policies and guidance:-

- Coursework/Controlled Assessment policy
- Appeals procedure
- The Use of Word processors
- Data protection
- Data Breach management procedures
- Examination Contingency plan
- Malpractice
- Procedure for Verifying Candidate identity
- AI Use in Assessments
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints procedure
- Child protection and Safeguarding
- Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy
- Curriculum policy

Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal (Head of Centre)

- Holds overall responsibility for Ballymena Academy as an Examination Centre.
- Ensures that The National Centre Number Register (NCNR) is updated annually.
- Is up to date with the contents of JCQ and Awarding Authority policies and guidance and annually directs centre staff to updated publications.
- Advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice.

The Examinations Officer

- Implements the contents of annually updated JCQ & Awarding Authority publications.
- Manages the administration of public examinations.
- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Department, class teachers and other relevant support staff on annual examination timetables and application procedures as set by the various examination boards.
- Oversees the production and distribution, to staff and candidates, of an annual calendar for all examinations in which candidates will be involved and communicate regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed and understand those aspects of the examination timetable that will affect them.
- Provides exam timetables and relevant JCQ information for candidates.
- Where relevant, issues awarding body information to candidates.
- Issues centre exam information to candidates which will include information on:
 - exam clashes
 - arriving late for an exam
 - absence or illness during exams
 - what equipment is/is not provided by the centre
 - dress code
 - behaviour
 - mobile/electronic devices
 - food and drink
 - when results and certificates will be issued
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Liaises with the Learning Support Co-ordinator re the administration of Access Arrangements , applications for Special Consideration - using 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.
- Manages the Chief Invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of Exam Invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams. Holds meeting with the Invigilation Team at the start of each Examination Series to outline protocol.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ and Awarding Authority guidelines.
- Oversees the submission of candidates' coursework marks, tracks, despatches and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Applies for any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes the timely entry of candidates for their examinations.

- Liaises with Learning Support Co-ordinator re the implementation of Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.
- Liaises with the Learning Support Co-ordinator to ensure invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates, and those acting as a facilitator supporting access arrangement candidates, fully understand the respective roles and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room.
- Organises and oversees temporary access arrangements.
- Supports the Head of Centre in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed of any conflict of interest declared by members of centre staff and in maintaining records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected before the published deadline for entries.
- Briefs other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forward, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.
- Liaises with Heads of Department:
 - to ascertain specific subject entries for external examinations;
 - to ensure that necessary internal assessment/coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines;
 - about the despatch of coursework marks and coursework.
- Attends relevant training provided by the Exams Boards/JCQ.

Assistant Examinations Officer

- Assists the Examinations officer in relation to all of the above.

Vice-Principal (Administration)

- Supports and monitors the work of the Examinations Officer and the Assistant Examinations officer.
- Oversees, monitors, evaluate and reviews external examinations procedures and policies.

Vice-Principal (Curriculum)

- Informs relevant centre staff of JCQ and awarding body documentation relating to the exam process that has been updated.
- Signposts relevant centre staff to information that should be provided to candidates.

Learning Support Co-ordinator (and Assistant Learning Support Co-ordinator)

- Leads on the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments process within the centre.
- Works with the examinations officer, teaching staff support staff (such as Learning Support Assistants) and exam office personnel to ensure that approved access arrangements reasonable adjustments are put in place for internal school tests, mock examinations and examinations.
- Where appropriate, works with specialist, advisory teachers, educational psychologists and medical professionals.
- determines appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Carries out appropriate assessments and advises the Examination's team, on the following:-

examination requirements for:

- Statemented pupils.
- Pupils requiring extra time/modified papers.
- Pupils on long term absence due to SEN issues.

- Applies for approval through access arrangements online (AAO), where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO.
- Notifies Examinations Officer of Access Arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course and no later than two weeks before each examination season).
- Submits names of Access candidates to Subject Leaders.
- Informs candidates of the access arrangements that are in place for their exams and assessments.
- Administers and implements Access Arrangements and works with the Examinations Officer to ensure invigilators and those acting as a facilitator fully understand their respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room.
- Carries out identification, information gathering and testing of candidates' requirements for Access Arrangements.
- is responsible for provision of additional support for candidates with identified additional needs including, English for speakers of other languages e.g. IT equipment, iPads and tablets to help candidates achieve their course aims.
- Records and updates all Special Consideration Candidates and their details SIMS (Learning Support Co-ordinator Records).
- Provides information when requested by a JCQ inspector and provides evidence of the specialist assessor's qualification.
- Liaises with the Examinations Officer, Heads of Year and Heads of Department on related matters.
- Reviews relevant policy and guidance documentation.

Heads of Department/Subject Leaders

- Undertake key tasks, as detailed in JCQ and Awarding Authority guidance, relevant school policies, as listed above.
- Inform the Examinations Officer immediately, or at the very least prior to the deadlines, of any subsequent changes to final entry information, which includes:- changes to candidate personal details; amendments to existing entries; withdrawals of existing entries.
- Check final entry submission information provided by the Examinations Officer and confirm that information is correct.
- Familiarise themselves and their staff with the annual exams plan of internal deadlines.
- Meet internal deadlines set by the Examinations Officer and Learning Support Co-ordinator
- Ensure teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications.
- Ensure teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events or have details and resources shared with them if they are unable to attend.
- Provide guidance to candidates about examination entries, amendments to entries and post results issues.

Teaching Staff

- Undertake key tasks, as detailed in school policies, JCQ & Awarding Authority guidance.
- Meet internal deadlines set by their Head of Department, the Examinations Officer and Learning Support Co-ordinator.
- Keep updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications.
- Attend relevant training and update events.
- Provide their Head of Department with all the information needed for the accurate and prompt completion of exam related forms, documents, mark sheets, etc.
- Ensure appropriate instructions for conducting internal assessment are followed.

- Ensure candidates are aware of JCQ and awarding body information for candidates on producing work that is internally assessed (coursework, non-examination assessments, social media) prior to assessments taking place.
- Ensure candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks as a candidate may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.

Invigilators

- Invigilators assist the Examinations Officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations and thus they will:
 - Attend training, update, briefing and review sessions as required.
 - Follow school, JCQ and Awarding Authority guidance.
 - Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate.
 - Sign a confidentiality and security agreement.

Office Staff

- Support the Examinations Officer in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials and follow the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials.
- Assist with other administrative tasks e.g. issuing results slips and certificates.

Site staff

- Support the Examinations Officer in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources.

IT Technician

- Provides and prepares suitable computer/IT equipment as needed, in consultation with the Examinations Officer.
- Configures software as per JCQ guidelines.

Candidates

Where applicable in this policy, the term 'Candidates' refers to candidates and/or their parents/carers. Candidates are responsible for:

- Checking, confirming and signing of entries, notifying the Examinations Officer of any discrepancies.
- following coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the school and JCQ regulations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually to reflect current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance. This policy is subject to change at any point during the academic year to reflect nationwide changes. The school will endeavour to share such changes with all affected as appropriate.

This policy will be communicated to all relevant centre staff.