



Ballyclare Secondary School

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

Ballyclare Secondary School **Examinations Policy**

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The purpose of this Examination 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 by the Head of Centre, Vice Principal and the Exams Officer.

1. Exam Responsibilities

Head of Centre / Principal

- overall responsibility for the Ballyclare Secondary School as an Exam 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*.

Exams Officers

- manages the administration of public exams
- advises the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Department, Class Teachers 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 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 Chief Exams 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
- 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
- processes EARs and provides guidance for pupils and parents.

Vice Principal

- Organisation of Learning and Teaching.
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4 and 5

Heads of Department

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures (see Guidance pamphlet).
- 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.

Careers Teachers

- Guidance and Careers Information.

SENCO

- Notification of Access Arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to Heads of Department.
- 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, i-pads and tablets to help candidates achieve their course aims.
- As recommended by JCQ all Special Consideration Candidates and their details should be recorded and updated on SIMS (SENCO Records).

Chief 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 before candidates leave the Exam room and their return to the Exams Office for collection by CCEA (or posting as applicable).
- Attend relevant Training Courses.

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 Qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Vice Principal and Heads of Department.

The Qualifications offered are GCSE, A Levels, Key Skills, Entry Level, OCR Level 2, City & Guilds and BTec.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in BSS' Prospectus for that year.

If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the Exams Office must be informed by the 30th September of current Exam Series.

At Key Stage 3

All candidates may be assessed in Communication, Using Mathematics, and ICT (optional from 2013).

The School will consider the use of intervention or booster strategies in connection with any candidates who are unlikely to attain the minimum level.

Decisions on whether candidates should be assessed in any individual subject will be taken in consultation with the Parents/Carers, SENCO and the Subject Teachers.

At Key Stage 4

All candidates may 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 13 and A2 in Year 14 or another appropriate qualification.

3. Exam Seasons and Timetables

Exam Seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in November, December and May. December (Mocks) and May exams will be held under formalised Exam conditions.

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

Which Exam Boards are used in the Centre is decided by the Heads of Department.

Timetables

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

4. Entries, Entry Details, Late Entries and Resits

Entries

Candidates are selected for their Exam entries by the Heads of Department and the Subject Teachers.

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

The Centre accepts external entries from former candidates only.

Late Entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department with the Entry Sheets.

Late entries are authorised by Head of Centre and Exams Officer but paid for by Departments.

Resits

Candidates are allowed 1 resit per subject in GCSE.

Candidates are allowed 1 resit per subject in AS.

Candidates may be allowed resits in A2

Resit decisions will be made in consultation with the Candidates, Subject Teachers, Exams Officer and the Heads of Department.

5. Exam Fees

GCSE, AS and A2 initial registration and entry Exam fees are paid by the Centre.

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.**

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

Resit fees for first resit are paid by the Centre.

Candidates must pay the fee for an Enquiry about Result, (EARS) should the Centre not uphold the enquiry and the Candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.

Failure to attend any externally timetabled examination, without a valid reason, may result in candidates being billed for the full cost of the entry.

6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements

DDA

The Disability Discrimination Act 2010 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.

Special Needs

A candidate's Special Needs requirements are determined by the SENCO and the Educational Psychologist / Specialist Teacher. All evidence to be retained by SENCO. Parents to be informed by SENCO of the Access Arrangements, by letter, and also explain to pupils what these arrangements are. These pupils must also sign the "Data Protection Notice", again the responsibility of SENCO.

The SENCO will inform Subject Teachers and Exams Officers 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.

Access Arrangements

Making Special Arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO, as is submitting completed Access Arrangement applications to the Awarding Bodies.

Rooming for Access Arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO and communicated in writing to the candidates.

On the day of the exam, SENCO to collect papers, deliver to correct room and return to Examinations Officer. A check should also be made that all SEN pupils are in the correct room with the correct staff and correct paper.

Invigilation and support for Access Arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO. This includes all invigilation staff being informed of specific arrangements and their role in the invigilation process as outlined in the JCQ Access Arrangements document.

7. Estimated Grades

Estimated Grades

The Heads of Department will submit estimated grades on line, when requested by the Exams Officer.

8. Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

Managing Invigilators

External invigilators will be used for CCEA Exam supervision.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Chief Invigilator and Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (Access NI) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Chief Invigilator and Head of Centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Chief Invigilator.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by CCEA.

Exam Days

The Exams Office 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/Exams Officer are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Chief Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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

Procedures for Emergency Evacuation of Exam Site.

At start of Examination Invigilators must inform candidates of evacuation procedures of exam rooms. (Details will also be displayed in each Exam Hall) Evacuated Candidates must go to **Assembly Point B**, located at front door of School. Candidates must remain there, in isolation, returning to Exam Halls to complete examination. A report will be submitted to relevant Exam Board.

Exam Papers

These 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. Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration

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 (this includes mobile phones and other electronic devices).

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.

Clash Candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays if required.

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

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.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Exams Office by the Heads of Department.

Appeals against Internal Assessments

The Centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure 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 May to the Head of Centre 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.

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

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the Centre.

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.

Candidates who cannot be present may authorise/nominate (in writing only) someone to collect their results.

EARs

EARs may be requested by Centre Staff or Candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

Candidates must be made aware that with re-mark scripts there is the possibility that their marks may be lowered, unchanged or increased. The fee for this remark will be paid by the candidate. This fee will be reimbursed if the appeal is upheld.

ATS (Access to Scripts)

After the release of results, candidates may ask Subject Staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results. The fee will be paid by the candidate. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. The fee for this service will be paid by the relevant Department.

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

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party from the School Office, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The Centre retains certificates for one year.

13. Appeals Committee

There will be an Appeals Committee to investigate any requests for appeal by a candidate, or parent/guardian of a candidate.

If any individual teacher has an issue with any exam arrangements or any queries brought to them by students in their teaching groups or form class, please inform your Head of Department who can then inform the Exams Office for investigation.

This Committee will sit to look at appeals against any issues of malpractice, or any other issues reported to awarding bodies, that a candidate or parent/guardian may disagree with.

This committee will comprise:

Chairperson:	Mrs K Bell	Principal / Head of Centre
	Mrs W Shingleton	Vice-Principal (School Organisation)
	Mrs C Graham	Exams Officer
	Miss L Collins	Sixth Form Tutor
	Year Teachers of Year 12	

Head of Centre

Exams Officer

The policy is next due for review January 2017