

EXAM POLICY

Term of policy: One year

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Consulted with JCC? Yes ☐ No ☒

Introduction

This policy replaces any previous policy and follows the DfE regulations.

In line with the School's Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs policies, we aim to give all students equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of School life, as far as is appropriate, practicable and compatible with giving regard to health and safety and the efficient education of other students.

The policy will follow the five principles of the Children's Plan:

- to support parents and families
- to allow children to reach their full potential
- to enable children to enjoy their childhood whilst preparing for adult life
- to provide services in response to children and family needs
- to use preventative measures to help students avoid the possibility of failure

This policy is based upon the School's commitment to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive and inclusive ethos for all members of the School community.

Foreword

Rooks Heath School is a mixed 11 to 18 multicultural comprehensive in the London Borough of Harrow. Years 12 and 13 are attached to the School as part of the Harrow School Consortium and this policy also applies to any activities organised for them, although there are extra regulations in place to comply with Harrow Schools' rules. This policy is formulated by the Exams Office, in consultation with staff and is monitored by members of the School's Chair of Governors Group. The policy is subject to annual review by them and is subject to approval by the Governors of the School.

The purpose of this exam policy is:

1. To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.
2. 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.

1. Exam Responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the School as an exam centre:

- The Head of Centre is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the Centre is always compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements in order to ensure the security and integrity of examinations and assessments (*JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres 2024-2025*)

In addition, the Head of Centre, in conjunction with the Exams Officer as the main point of contact:

- advises on appeals and reviews of marking
- is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document '*Suspected Malpractice Policies & Procedures*'

Exams Officer

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

1. advises the senior leadership team, subject teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and assessment procedures as set by the various awarding bodies and the *JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) 2024-2025*
2. 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
3. ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
4. provides candidates with details of the EAR (Enquiries about Results) services available to them when exam results are issued

5. consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary non-examined assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
6. provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries to awarding bodies as required
7. receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
8. administers with the Learning Support department all aspects of Access Arrangements for exams and makes applications for Special Consideration online with reference to the JCQ '*Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments*' and '*Guide to the Special Consideration Process*'
9. identifies and manages and resolves exam timetable clashes
10. accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
11. line manages the invigilation team in exams, being responsible for organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
12. works with departments to submit candidates' non-examined assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned non-examined assessment and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
13. arranges for the distribution of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT where appropriate, any appeals/review of marking requests
14. maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams

Deputy Head Curriculum / Headteacher

1. Organisation of teaching and learning
2. External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4 / Post-16

Heads of Department

1. Guidance and pastoral overview of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
2. Involvement in post-results procedures when required
3. Accurate completion of non-examined assessment records of marks and declaration sheets
4. Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set

Teachers

1. Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
2. Submission of candidate names to heads of department or via mark sheets to the Exams Officer (e.g. for entry to examinations or tiers of entry)

SENCo and Learning Support Department

1. Administration of access arrangements
2. Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements
3. Provision of additional support. See section 6.3 below

Lead Invigilators/Invigilators

1. Help the Exams Office staff with secure delivery of exam papers and other material to the exam room before the start of the exam as required and double-check that correct papers have been delivered.

2. Oversee the collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the Exams Office, or until collected by Exam Office.
3. Collation of exam papers into correct order ensuring exam numbers are correctly written on papers; completion of registers as required; helping with despatch process when required due to large volume of scripts.

Candidates

1. Confirmation of details of entries as supplied by Exams Office.
2. Understanding of non-examined assessment regulations and signature of a declaration that authenticates the non-examined assessment as their own.

Administrative staff

1. Support for the input of data.
2. Despatch 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 and the Heads of Departments.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, Level 2 Certificate, GCE, Level 3 Certificate, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals, Entry Level Certificate and Functional Skills.

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 e-mail as soon as possible after the start of the Autumn Term.

2.1 At Key Stage 4

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

2.2 At Post-16

It is expected that all A2 qualifications during Year 13; some students will be entered for AS qualifications in Year 12. Post-16 students have the alternative of completing Level 3 BTECs.

In addition, the centre will facilitate where possible Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing upon request for Year 13 candidates. Candidates are liable for any entry fees for these tests.

3. Exam Seasons and Timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled as required by Senior Leadership, in consultation with Head of Year and Heads of Department, throughout the academic year

In 2024-2025 external exams are scheduled in the November, January and June seasons.

All internal exams for Years 10 – 13 are held under exam conditions similar to those required for external exams.

3.2 Timetables

The Exams Office 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 and subject teachers.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of tier or withdrawal. To be agreed in conjunction with the Deputy Head for Curriculum and Assessment, Head of Year and Head of Department.

The centre accepts external entries from former students of the School only.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department via e-mail.

Late entries are authorised by Heads of Department and Exams Office.

4.3 Retakes (Post 16 only)

Retake decisions are made in consultation with the candidates, subject teachers and the Head of Sixth Form and will be allowed depending on the individual rules of the awarding bodies. (See also section 5: Exam Fees)

5. Identification of candidates in the exam hall

Candidates are identifiable in one of three ways:

- Senior Leaders and the Head of Year present at the start of the exams are familiar with students and are to pay close attention to students as they enter the exams; in larger exam spaces, students line up in their rows and Year 11 sit examinations in Rooks Heath School uniform
- Invigilators may check student identities by using photographs and names provided in the two main exam locations
- Sixth Form students (both from Rooks Heath and away schools) are required to have their Rooks Heath student photo lanyard on their desk; for Sixth Form photos are again available for invigilators to check and the Head of Sixth might be asked to verify student identity if a student seems unfamiliar

6. Exam Fees

For GCSE, Level 2 Certificate, GCE, Level 3 Certificate, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals, entry Level Certificate and Functional Skills, initial registration and first entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or post-deadline amendment fees are paid by the candidates, unless decided otherwise by the Exam Office.

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 may be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary non-examined assessment requirements. The decision will be made by the Exam Office.

GCE fees for any retakes are paid by the candidates.
(See also section 4.3: Retakes)

Candidates must pay the fee for any Post Results Service, unless it is ordered by staff (with the student's permission), in which case the relevant department has to pay.
(See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

7. The Equality Act 2010, special needs and access arrangements

7.1 The Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, where something a school does places a disabled pupil at a disadvantage, compared to other pupils, then the school must take reasonable steps to try and avoid that disadvantage. Rooks Heath is expected to provide an auxiliary aid or service for a disabled pupil when it would be reasonable to do so and if such an aid would alleviate any substantial disadvantage that the pupil faces in comparison to non-disabled pupils. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

7.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCo, doctor and the educational psychologist/specialist teacher.

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 Learning Support Dept. can then inform individual staff and the Exam Office of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

7.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the joint responsibility of the Learning Support Department and the Exams Office.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Learning Support Department.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exam Office in

conjunction with the Learning Support Department for both external and internal exams.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Learning Support Dept. for internal exams. Invigilation will be organised by the Exams Office for external exams.

The Learning Support Department provide:

- A scribe and/or reader and extra time, when for example, a student has a Specific Learning difficulty, such as dyslexia.
- Additionally, some students are entitled to use a laptop/tablet/desktop computer, or other electronic aid permitted by current JCQ regulations.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Office. School staff may be used occasionally, if there is no other option, subject to the current JCQ restrictions.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration with assistance from the Exam Office. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Details of DBS clearance procedures are to be found in the Code of Conduct Policy and are in accordance with current legislative requirements.

Invigilators are timetabled, trained and briefed by the Exams Office.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

8.2 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 invigilators.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, as instructed by the Exams Office.

The lead invigilator and/or Exams Office staff will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

The Head of Centre, Deputy Headteacher, and/or Head of Year may be present at the start of the exam, at the request of the Exams Office, to assist with identification of candidates and to support the smooth start to the exam but must not advise on any aspect of the exam paper, and those staff cannot be present if they are the teachers of the subject being examined. Other teaching staff must not enter then exam room(s) as per the current JCQ regulations.

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

Public exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before all candidates have finished the exam. Spare papers will be distributed only by the Exams Office to Heads of Department/Faculty after the end of the last sitting of an exam, or the next day, at the discretion of the Exams Officer.

- 8.3 An Exams Contingency Plan is in place and is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and the Exams Office. The Contingency Plan is in line with guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and the awarding bodies and is subject to review at regular intervals.

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 Candidates

In accordance with JCQ regulations, the centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones, smartwatches and all 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.

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 an invigilator must accompany them. Each instance will be logged by invigilators.

The Exams and Assessment Office 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 Office will be responsible as necessary for identifying clashes and making arrangements for the secure supervision of candidates between clashes, including the identification of escorts and a secure venue, and arranging overnight stays if necessary.

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 Exams Office, 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 Office will then submit online a Special Consideration Request to the relevant awarding body within the timeframe specified by JCQ for the season.

10. Results and Post Results Services

10.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual statements of results on results days in person at the centre, or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide a self-addressed envelope), or via intranet/email.

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 Office.

10.2 Post Results - EARs

EARs may be requested in writing to the Exams Office by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. If ordered by staff, the student's written permission must be sought before application (e.g. by email).

The Headteacher may authorise EARs to be paid for by the school in exceptional circumstances, but individual EARs are otherwise to be paid for by the candidate requesting one.

10.3 Post Results - ATS

After the release of results, candidates may pay for and request the return of photocopy or original scripts prior to the awarding body deadline for this service.

If a result is queried, the Exams Office, teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense.

Centre staff may also request a photocopy or original scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The written consent of candidates must be obtained and the requesting department must pay for the service and undertake to store the scripts securely until disposed of.

Exam script reviews of marking cannot be ordered once an original script has been returned.

All EAR Service requests must be made to the Exams Office in writing or by e-mail.

11. Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so in writing or by e-mail. The third party must show proof of identity on collection.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for a minimum of two years.

12. Related policies

For matters regarding the following please see the specific policies of the same name:

- Complaints Policy
- Internal appeals procedure
- Malpractice Policy
- NEA Policy
- Word Processor Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy