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1. The 11-16 Exams Policy

The Policy Purpose

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 exams system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exams processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

The Exams Policy will be reviewed annually.

The Exams Policy will be reviewed by the Trustees' Quality of Education Committee.

Outlining staff responsibilities

Exams Manager:

- reports on all related matters to the Headteacher and acts upon his/her instructions. The Headteacher retains ultimate decision-making authority over all matters;
- produces annual exam timetables;
- communicates with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events;

- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- ensures parents and candidates are aware of JCQ publications and regulations
- consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary non-exam assessments are completed on time and in accordance with the Thomas Keble non-examination Assessment Policy (see Appendix 1).
- receives, records, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts;
- administers, in conjunction with the SENCO, access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publication Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration;
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes;
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges;
- manages the organising, recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exam;
- submits candidates' non-exam assessment marks to the exam boards prior to published deadlines;
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and manages, in consultation with the SMT, any appeals/re-mark requests;
- ensure invigilators are fully trained;
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Heads of Department:

- provide accurate and timely information of syllabus including Board and appropriate codes;
- confirm and monitor departmental entries;
- inform Exam Office of any amendments and/or withdrawals in advance of the published deadlines;
- submit candidates' non-exam assessment marks in accordance with the Thomas Keble Management of Non-Examination Assessments Policy in advance of the published deadlines;
- inform Exam Office of any additional requirements such as alternative rooms, double desks etc;
- liaise with Exams Office regarding dates for practical assessments.

Teachers are responsible for:

- providing evidence to support any access arrangement requests (as soon as possible before the end of Year 9) to SENCO;
- submission of entries via Head of Department;
- informing, in writing, the Headteacher of any pupil concerns e.g. attendance/incomplete or missed assessments;
- ensuring candidates understand non-exam assessment regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the work as their own.

SENCO is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements;
- provision of additional support, with identified requirements;
- liaising with Exam Office with regard to access arrangements;
- organising appropriate training for staff involved in access arrangements.

2. Qualifications

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre. The qualifications currently offered are GCSE, Entry Level, C.o.P.E Award and Cambridge National. 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 the end of June of the preceding year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the Heads of Department. Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Candidates, Parents/Carers, Subject teachers and Head of Subject. Any decision to withdraw a candidate will be taken by the Headteacher in consultation with the Head of Year.

3. Exam series and timetables

Exam seasons

Formal internal exams and assessments are scheduled in Term 2 for Year 11 and Term 4/5 for Year 10. External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the exams manager will circulate the exam timetable for external exams and ensure the school communicates this to parents; the Head of Year will circulate exam timetables for internal exams.

4. Entries, entry details and late entries

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject teachers. Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal providing the request stays within the normal exam fee. Withdrawal from a subject exam can only be agreed by the Headteacher.

The centre accepts external entries from former candidates only and this is only in exceptional circumstances. The centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department. Late entries are authorised by the Headteacher but late entry fees must be paid for by the subject department.

5. Exam fees

Exam fees

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.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the Centre. All other exam fees are paid by the Centre. Late entry or amendment fees are paid by Departments or Parents/Carers unless they are as a result of Exam Office administration errors.

No charges can be made for entry to a public examination on the DfE prescribed list, except where the pupil without good reason fails to attend or meet the requirements of the examination (e.g. fails to submit coursework, attend an oral component etc.). However, full costs will be charged for all re-sits, unless there are exceptional circumstances authorised by the Headteacher.

6. Disability Discrimination Act

Disability Discrimination Act

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Disability & Equality Act 2010. A person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The centre will meet the requirements of the Act by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

Access arrangements

Full details of these arrangements can be found in the Disability Policy (Exams). Further information can also be found in the School Accessibility Policy and the Equality Policy.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Headteacher. See the separate Exam Contingency Plan and the document filed in Q:\Data Office\Exams\contingency

Private candidates

Thomas Keble School is not registered to facilitate private candidates.

7. Managing invigilators

Managing invigilators

External staff are used to invigilate examinations. These invigilators will be used for external exams and appropriate KS4 examinations. Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Thomas Keble HR administration.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR administration. In Thomas Keble's case this will be processed by the HR Administrator DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Office. Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

Malpractice

The Headteacher will take all appropriate steps to ensure prevention of malpractice and is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice. In the event of suspected malpractice, Thomas Keble will follow the JCQ and Awarding Body regulations.

Exam days

The Exams Office will book all exam rooms and advise other users. The Exams Office will make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator. Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms. In practical exams subject teachers must 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 the following day.

8. Candidates

Candidates

Internal candidates are known to staff. If there is any doubt, the Head of Year can be asked to confirm identity. Candidate photographs are provided for invigilators.

The JCQ notification of conduct and candidates' use of mobile phones 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.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the Exams Office Staff.

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 Exams Office is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently. For clash candidates, the supervision of escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Exams Office.

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 Exams Office to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Exams Office will then complete the on-line special consideration form for the relevant awarding body.

9. Non-exam assessments and appeals

Heads of Departments who have courses with non-exam assessment elements must be familiar with the Internal Moderation Policy, the Non-Exam Assessment Appeal Policy and the Management of Non-Exam Assessments Policy.

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

Marks and appeals

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Heads of Department.

Appeals against internal assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate Non-Exam Assessment Appeal Policy.

10. Results

Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access To Scripts (ATS)

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at the centre or via a previously agreed email address (we require signed consent from the student to do this). 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 Headteacher.

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 candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a concern is raised about a particular examination result, the exams team and/or teaching staff and Head of Centre will investigate the feasibility of requesting a review and advise accordingly. The candidate will be required to pay the appropriate fee to the centre, and a request will be made to the awarding body on the candidate's behalf.

Following the outcome, an external appeals process is available if the Head of Centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome and believes there are grounds for appeal. The JCQ publications Post-Results Services

and JCQ Appeals Booklet (a guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes) will be consulted to determine the acceptable grounds for a preliminary appeal.

Where the Head of Centre is satisfied after receiving the outcome, but the candidate (or his/her parent/carer) believes there are grounds for a preliminary appeal to the awarding body, an internal appeal may be made to the head of centre by following the General Complaints Policy. Following this, the Head of Centre's decision as to whether to proceed with a preliminary appeal will be based upon the acceptable grounds as detailed in the JCQ Appeals Booklet. Candidates or parents/carers are not permitted to make direct representations to an awarding body.

ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask for the return of papers for which the appropriate charge will be made.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The consent of candidates must be obtained.

12. Certificates

Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for. The centre retains certificates for two years (statutory time is one year).

Management of Non-Examination Assessments

Outlining staff responsibilities - GCSE non-examination assessment

Headteacher: Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of non-examination assessments. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines

- Ensure that all staff have a calendar of events
- Work with the Head of Department to ensure that staff involved have suitable secure storage facilities.

Heads of Department/Faculty

- Ensure you are familiar with the Non-Exam Assessment Appeal Policy and the Internal Moderation Policy.
- Ensure assessments comply with awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.
- Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.
- Liaise with Exam Office with regard to dates for Non-Examination Assessments to ensure facilities/rooms available and suitable assistance for those with Access Arrangements.
- Standardise/moderate the marking of all teachers and pass results to the exam office.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to non-examination assessment and that there is a suitable system in place to record dates, times, incidents etc.
- 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 non-examination assessments*".
- Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting non-examination assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.
- Obtain, from Heads of Departments, 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 (available from Heads of Departments) on completion of an assessment.
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks, via Heads of Departments, to the exams office 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.

Exams Office staff

- Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission.
- On the few occasions where non-examination assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where non-examination assessment can be carried out.

Special Educational Needs Coordinator/Additional Learning Support

- Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.
- Ensure support staff are supplied where required.

Thomas Keble School Use of Laptops Policy

Thomas Keble School believes that handwriting is a skill for life and that it should be developed alongside the typing skills that our students develop as they continue through life. This means that our initial response to a student who has difficulty writing legibly is to give them additional support with their handwriting so that this skill is developed rather than lost by reverting purely to word processing.

Thomas Keble School is committed to supporting all of our students to achieve their full potential. However, we do not have the resources to fund examination enabled laptops to all students (personal laptops cannot be used in examinations) and therefore have to ensure that we do not advantage some students over others.

“A word processor cannot simply be granted to a candidate because he/she now wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard or because he/she uses a laptop at home.” (**Joint Council for Qualifications [JCQ] adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties – Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2022 section 5.8.4**).

Transition from primary or another school to Thomas Keble School:

If a student’s normal way of working at primary school (or another secondary school) is to use a laptop we would need evidence of this normal way of working as this must be on our file for inspectors to explain the need and normal way of working. For example, a letter from the SENCo and copies of word-processed examinations or work or exercise books with word-processed work stuck in.

KS3:

We are very keen to support students in their acquisition of legible handwriting as this is a skill for life. We run handwriting interventions to enable the development of legible handwriting. We assess students for whom we have a history of need for possible examination access arrangements for GCSE in the second half of Year 9.

GCSE:

There should be enough evidence to demonstrate a requirement by the beginning of Year 10 or, at the very latest, after the Year 10 internal examinations.

Next steps if interventions fail:

If interventions have not enabled the student to write legibly we will then investigate to see if further interventions are required or if the student would be eligible for the examination access arrangement of a word processor. Parents are informed of the results of these assessments by letter.

Regulations which we are required to follow:

Examination access arrangements are to level the playing field and “allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- Access the assessment;
- Show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.” (JCQ)

A laptop in examinations needs a specific and appropriate need to warrant its use so that the candidate is **not having an advantage over all other candidates**. If their writing is illegible because they are not taking care then that is not an appropriate need.

Some appropriate uses are:

- A learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly.
- A medical condition.
- A physical disability.
- A sensory impairment.
- Handwriting which has been hard to decipher over a number of years without improvement (**even though there have been documented interventions**).
- A candidate who has substantial problems with organisation of ideas and this has been documented over a number of years.

Student responsibility if laptop use is granted:

This need means that using a laptop will be their **normal way of working** as they cannot record their learning and demonstrate their knowledge without it. We will have evidence of their normal way of working (required for JCQ inspectors) because they will be word-processing their work in most lessons and homeworks. It is the student's responsibility to print off their work and stick it into exercise books. Without this evidence that word-processing is their normal way of working they will not be able to use it in examinations.

In order to retain this access arrangement, it is also important that students follow the school policy on acceptable computer use.