



## Exams Policy

Policy Lead:	<b>Assistant Headteacher (CH)</b>
Last Review Date:	March 2021
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Approval needed by:	<b>Headteacher</b>

The purpose of this exams policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests 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 exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

The exams policy will be reviewed every two years.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the deputy head, senior leadership team and the exams officer.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

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### **Exam responsibilities**

#### **The head of centre:**

- has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document - Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

#### **Exams officer:**

- manages the administration of internal exams and external exams.
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- oversees the production and distribution, to all centre 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 exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publication - A guide to the special consideration process.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.

**Curriculum team leaders** are responsible for:

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post-results procedures.

**Teachers** are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer.

The **special educational needs coordinator (SENCO)** is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- process any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

**Lead invigilator/invigilators** are responsible for:

- assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- 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 ensuring their return to the exams office.

**Candidates** are responsible for:

- checking their own exam entries.

- understanding 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 JCQ regulations.

### **Qualifications offered**

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the CTL's and the senior leadership team.

The types of qualifications offered are GCSE and entry level.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by 1<sup>st</sup> September in the year of first teaching.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the CTL's

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by in consultation with the candidates, subject leaders and the CTL's.

### **Exam series**

Internal exams (mock or trial exams) and assessments are scheduled in December and May.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in June.

Internal exams in Maths, English and Science plus other subjects that request this are held under external exam conditions.

The head of centre, deputy head and the senior leadership team decides which exam series are used in the centre.

### **Exam timetables**

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for external exams.

### **Entries, entry details and late entries**

The centre does not accept entries from private candidates. However, consideration will be given to candidates if they have previously attended the school.

The centre does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to curriculum team leaders via email.

Curriculum team leaders will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of the deputy head and the exams officer. Any entries or amendments made after the deadlines will be charged to the appropriate department.

## **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.

The exams officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the department.

## **Access to Fair Assessment Statement**

- The Oaks Academy aim to provide a variety of qualifications which provide all students with the opportunity to achieve their full potential by the most appropriate and direct route.
- Our Assessment Policy is based on the concepts of equality, diversity, clarity, consistency and openness.
- We will endeavour to ensure that the assessment processes are implemented in a way which is fair and non-discriminatory.

## **Access**

Students are made aware of the existence of this policy and have open access to it. It can be found online at [www.theoaksacademy.co.uk](http://www.theoaksacademy.co.uk).

All tutors are made aware of the contents and purpose of this policy.

This policy is reviewed annually and may be revised in response to feedback from students, tutors and external organisations.

## **What students can expect from us**

- We aim to ensure that all assessment of work is carried out fairly and in keeping with the awarding body's requirements.
- All portfolio-based work will be assessed fairly against the qualification standards and teachers involved will be fully trained.
- Internal assessments will be carried out fairly and according to awarding body instructions.
- Externally marked tests and exams will be according to the requirements of the awarding body.

## **Students can also expect:**

- To be fully inducted onto a new course and given information that can be shared with parents and carers.
- Learning outcomes, performance criteria and other significant elements of learning and assessment to be made clear at the outset of the course and when assignments are set.
- To be given appropriate assessment opportunities during the course with feedback provided on the quality of the work.
- All work to be marked within two weeks of submission by the student.
- Where equivalents and exemptions can be applied, we will ensure this is pursued with the relevant awarding body.

## **Cheating and Plagiarism**

A fair assessment of student's work can only be made if that work is entirely the student's own. Therefore students can expect an awarding body to be informed if:

- They are found guilty of copying, giving or sharing information or answers, unless part of a joint project
- They use an unauthorised aid during a test or examination
- They copy another student's answers during a test or examination
- They talk during a test or examination.

All allegations of cheating and plagiarism will lead to a full investigation which will follow the guidance of the relevant awarding body.

If a student feels he/she has been wrongly accused of cheating or plagiarism, they should be referred to the Complaints Policy.

### **The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements**

#### **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.

#### **Access arrangements**

The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO, doctor and educational psychologist/specialist teacher.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCO.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO with the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the SENCO with the exams officer.

#### **Equality Legislation**

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the deputy head, senior leadership team and the exams officer.

### **Estimated grades**

The curriculum team leaders will submit estimated grades via SIMS after every assessment point (internal). These can be used to inform the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

### **Contingency planning**

In the event of the Exams Officer's (Karen Atkinson) absence, responsibility for the administration of the exams procedures, as outlined in this policy, will fall to Jane Derry and Jane Edwards, overseen by The Head.

### **Managing invigilators**

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

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

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the exams office.

The head of centre in consultation with exams officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

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.

Site management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements well in advance.

The senior leadership team/lead invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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 in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no earlier than 24 hours after candidates have completed them.

### **Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration**

The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

The exams officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day.

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

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the exams officer, or the exam invigilator to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam.

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

### **Internal assessment and appeals**

It is the duty of heads of department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the CTL's. The exams officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

### **Results, enquiries about results (EARS) and access to scripts (ATS)**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days,

- in person at the centre
- by post to their home address - candidates to provide a self-addressed envelope
- Candidates sending a representative to collect their results should supply them with a signed letter requesting this. Previous contact with the school, regarding this, should take place.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the senior leader.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the senior leader.

## **Enquiries about Results (EAR)**

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the centre will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the exams officer, following the JCQ guidance.

## **Access to Scripts (ATS)**

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within three days of the receipt of results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the exams officer.

## **Certificates**

Candidates will receive their certificates

- in person at the centre during Awards Evening
- posted (first class)
- collected and signed for

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre retains certificates for one year.

## **Fire evacuation procedures**

In the event of a fire alarm, the following procedures apply:

- Note the time that the fire alarm went off and how long the examination has been going on.
- All examination question and answer papers and materials should be left on the candidates' exam desk and NOT taken out with them. No bags or personal belongings should be taken out of the Examination Room with the candidates.

- Tell the students to remain calm and ask them to leave their belongings and papers on their desk and leave by the nearest fire exit. Invigilators will point these out to candidates at the beginning of each exam.
- **IMPORTANT – BEFORE** the students exit the Examination Room, remind them that they are still under examination board conditions and under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** should talk to one another or use a mobile phone. Remind them that a breach of regulations could mean disqualification from their examination.
- **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES** are students to take their mobile phones or other electronic devices outside with them. This will be a breach of examination board regulations and they will risk being disqualified from their examination.
- One invigilator should leave with a group at each fire exit. The registers (photocopied and original) should be taken out with the invigilators, together with pens. Invigilators should take a roll-call, to ensure that all students are present and accounted for.
- **IMPORTANT** - the students should assemble on the tennis courts in the far right hand corner. This will ensure that they are isolated from the other classes/students. Please line up the students according to the examination taken e.g. 1 line for GCSE Media, 1 line for GCSE French etc.
- A member of the SLG will inform invigilators when it is safe to re-enter the building.

Note the time of re-starting the examination and change the finish time. Inform the Examination Officer of the incident, so that a Special Consideration Form can be produced.

### **INTERNAL APPEALS POLICY**

In accordance with the Code of Practice for the conduct of external qualifications produced by DfE, ~The Oaks Academy is committed to ensuring that:

- internal assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills;
- assessment evidence provided by candidates has been produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the specification;
- the consistency of the internal assessment is secured through internal standardisation as necessary;
- staff responsible for internal standardisation attend any compulsory training sessions.

Each awarding body publishes its arrangements for appeals against its decisions. In addition, an appeal can be made to the School concerning internal assessment:

- the appeal applies only to the procedures used in arriving at internal assessment decisions and does not apply to the mark or grade itself;
- the parent or guardian must make the appeal in writing to the School's Examinations Officer: appeals should normally be made by 30<sup>th</sup> April for examinations in the summer series. This deadline may be

extended in exceptional circumstances in situations where the coursework marking and moderation schedule extends beyond this time;

- the enquiry into the internal process will normally be led by the Head of Centre and Examinations Officer, provided that neither has played any part in the original internal assessment process;
- the teacher making the assessment will be able to respond to the appeal in writing, and a copy will be sent to the appellant;
- the enquiry will consider whether the procedures used for the internal assessment were in conformity with the published requirements of the Awarding Body and the 'Code of Practice'.

The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including:

- relevant communications with the Awarding Body;
- any steps taken to further protect the interest of the candidates.

If the appellant is unhappy about the response in writing, he/she can ask for a personal hearing, where the panel will consist of two persons not previously involved, normally the Head Teacher and a member of the Board of Trustees.

### **Enquiries About Results (Re-marks)**

In cases of Enquiries about Results, where the school does not uphold a request for such an enquiry, the student may normally pay to have an enquiry carried out. Where the student wishes to challenge the decision not to hold an enquiry or consequent appeal, a similar procedure to that mentioned above will be carried out.

### **Note:**

Each awarding body specifies detailed criteria for the internal assessment of work. In addition, the awarding body must moderate the assessment and the final judgement on marks awarded is that of the awarding body. Appeals against matters outside the School's control will not be considered in the School's appeals procedure.

## APPENDIX A

### Risk Assessment - EXAMINATIONS

Risks & Issues	Possible remedial action		Staff (use 'RACI' to determine who should be listed)
	Forward planning	Action	
<b>Absent candidates</b>			
Candidates absent on day of examination	Make sure that candidates are aware that they need to have a valid reason, supported by evidence for not sitting an external examination.	Obtain medical/other evidence & submit to awarding body within time frame.	KA
Candidates have a scheduling clash for exams	Produce timetables early enough so we are aware of clashes. Thus giving enough time for them to be resolved.	Consult awarding body regarding procedures for dealing with timetabling clashes. Deal with clashes and agree with candidate course of action to be taken. Ensure a detailed plan of action is available for each exam clash.	KA
<b>Venue</b>			
Exam venue unavailable	Make sure exam rooms are requested in plenty of time. Have a back up venue in case of exceptional circumstances.	Use alternative venue	KA
<b>Supervision</b>			
Invigilator phones in ill on day of exam		Consult invigilator list to see if anyone is available to cover. If not use Cover Supervisor.	KA
Matters arising in Examination Room during external examinations.	Make sure candidates are made aware that there will be consequences for non	Chief Invigilator to seek Exams Officer in first instance who will deal with the problem and	Chief Invigilator

	compliance during examinations as laid out by the Awarding Bodies.	escalate if necessary. Invigilator only to remove candidate if severely disrupting other candidates. Invigilator to chaperone candidate until superior found.	KA SLT
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## APPENDIX B

### Risk Assessment – CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT

Risks & Issues	Possible remedial action		Staff ( <i>use 'RACI' to determine who should be listed</i> )
	Forward planning	Action	
<b>Timetabling</b>			
Assessment schedule clashes with other activities	Plan/establish priorities well ahead (e.g. start of academic year) for all subjects or lines of learning	Plan dates in consultation with school calendar – negotiate with other parties	CTL
Too many assessments close together across subjects or lines of learning	Plan assessments so they are spaced over the duration of the course	Space assessments to at least allow candidates some time between assessments	Director of KS4
<b>Accommodation</b>			
Insufficient space in classrooms for candidates	Once group sizes are known at the start of the year, flag instances where regular classroom space may not be suitable to conduct controlled assessment	Use more than one classroom or multiple sittings where necessary	CTL and KA (if necessary)
Insufficient facilities for all candidates	Careful planning ahead and booking of rooms / centre facilities		CTL
<b>Downloading awarding body set tasks</b>			
IT system unavailable on day of assessment	Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date in all cases	Book IT equipment well ahead and download tasks before scheduled date of assessment	CTL

Teaching staff/assessors unable to access task details	Test secure access rights ahead of schedule every year and every session	Ensure teaching staff/assessors have access rights for correct area of awarding body secure extranet sites ahead of time	CTL
Loss of task details in transmission	Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date	Report loss to awarding body for replacement; download again	CTL/KA
<b>Absent candidates</b>			
Candidates absent for all or part of assessment (various reasons)	Plan alternative session(s) for candidates		CTL
Candidates have a scheduling clash for exams or assessment (possibly offsite on consortium teaching)	Always consider candidate timetables well ahead and decide on priorities in advance to scheduling clashes	Check before booking the date; provide an alternative date, where necessary and consult awarding body procedures for dealing with timetabling clashes  N.B. retakes of controlled assessment are limited	CTL/KA
<b>Control levels for task taking</b>			
Assessment is undertaken under incorrect level of control (time, resources, supervision and collaboration)	Ensure teaching staff/assessors know what level is applicable and understand what is involved. Provide training if required	Seek guidance from the awarding body	CTL/KA
Access arrangements not but in place	Teachers to be made aware of all pupils needing access arrangements during a assessment, teachers make alternative arrangements for theses pupils	List to be provided at the start of each Year 10 cohort	SENCO CTL
<b>Supervision</b>			
Student study diary/plan not provided or completed*	Ensure teaching staff/assessors are aware of the need for study diary/plans to be completed early in course	Ensure candidates start, continue and complete study diary/plans that are signed after every session	CTL and subject teacher

Teaching staff/assessors do not understand supervision of controlled assessment is their responsibility	Ensure teaching staff/assessors understand nature of controlled assessments and their role in supervision		CTL
Suitable supervisor has not been arranged for an assessment where teaching staff/assessors are <b>not</b> supervising	A suitable supervisor must be arranged for any controlled assessment where a teacher/assessor is not supervising, in line with the awarding body specification.		KA