

WORK SKILLS LEARNING

EXAMS POLICY

2015 / 2016

Date policy finalised:	September 2015
Date policy to be reviewed:	September 2016
People involved in writing the policy:	Leadership Team (consists of): Dayo Adeagbo Nickie Evans Andy Miklusiak Belinda Nailon
People involved in consultation process:	Leadership Team: Dayo Adeagbo Nickie Evans Andy Miklusiak Belinda Nailon
Committee responsible:	Leadership Team: Dayo Adeagbo Nickie Evans Andy Miklusiak Belinda Nailon
Display/availability:	Policy File WSL Google Drive / Website
Monitoring and Evaluation:	Leadership Team Dayo Adeagbo Nickie Evans Andy Miklusiak Belinda Nailon

The policy is next due for review on September 2016.

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 Work Skills Learning exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

Subject to changes in legislation, the Exams Policy will be reviewed every two years.

The Exams Policy will be reviewed by those responsible for writing the policy (listed on the front page of this policy).

Where references are made to Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations / guidelines further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Exam Responsibilities

The Director:

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an examination centre (centre number 04603), and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice – refer to the JQC document **Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments**.

Exams Officer:

- Manages the administration of any external exams, which are taken through the school.
- Advises the senior leadership team, extended leadership team, and class and subject teachers on exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Oversees the production and distribution of an annual calendar for all exams to all school staff and candidates.
- 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 publications for Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, and special consideration.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes

- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to exam costs / charges.
- Recruits invigilators and ensures that they are aware of examination protocols and procedures.
- Ensures that candidates coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted correctly and on schedule, along with any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies.
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates, and forwards any post-results service requests, in consultation with the Leader for Curriculum and Assessment.
- Ensures accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- Ensures accurate completion of coursework, controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Makes decisions on post–results procedures.

The Leader for Curriculum and Assessment is responsible for:

- Decisions on entries
- Standardisation and accuracy of marking of any coursework or other controlled assessment.
- Leading Subject Leaders in relation to their responsibilities (see below).
- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- Leading and managing Teachers to play a role in providing learners with support, in relation to their examination entries.

Subject Leaders are 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 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
- Supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the exams officer.

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.
- Ensuring full understanding and adherence to any access arrangements which the candidate(s) are entitled to.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and signing of 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 Leader for Curriculum and Assessment has overall responsibility for planning and deciding the school's accreditation offer.

The types of qualifications offered are:

- AQA Entry Level (applying for)
- Arts Award
- BTEC
- Functional Skills
- OCR
- GCSE

In addition, we offer a range of AQA Unit Awards at Entry Level and Level 1.

As we are a Special School, we personalise our accreditation offer for each individual, rather than provide a wholesale "accreditation package" for classes or Year Groups. We log an accreditation forecast for each individual learner in Key Stage Four and Key Stage Five. This can be accessed through SIMS.

If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the Exams Officer must be informed by June. Informing the Exams Officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Leader for Curriculum and Assessment.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Leader for Curriculum and Assessment in consultation with the Teacher and any other teams involved in the young person's provision and the parent / carer.

Exam Series:

External exams and assessments are scheduled in the Summer and Autumn Term

The Leader of Curriculum Assessment, the Leadership Team decide which exam series are used in the school.

The school does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only at times agreed between the Exams Officer and the HOS.

Exam Timetables:

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for GCSEs and Functional Skills Qualifications at a specified date before each series begins.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries:

Decisions around exam entries are made in consultation with learners and families. However, decisions rest ultimately with the school. Candidates or parents / carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The school does accept entries from private candidates. For example, on occasions learners with special educational needs on roll at another school or college, come to us for a proportion of their school week as part of their provision. This sometimes includes entry to particular qualifications.

Entry deadlines are circulated by the Exams Officer, to Heads of School and relevant teachers via email, teacher meetings and the school bulletin.

The Director will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines by the end of January.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of Leader for Curriculum and Assessment and the Exams Officer.

GCSE re-sits are allowed.

Functional Skills re-sits are allowed.

Re-sit decisions will be made by the Leader of the Curriculum and Assessment and Director in consultation with relevant teaching staff, learners and their parents / carers.

Exam Fees

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administration processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

The Exams Officer will publish the deadline for action well in advance for each exam series.

GCSE, Functional Skills, and all other entry, exam and/or registration fees are paid by the school. Where candidates are external to Work Skills Learning (i.e. have another school or college as their primary placement) exams fees need to be paid by their primary placement provider, either directly, or indirectly as part of a wider support package.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the school.

Re-sit fees are paid by the school, unless the candidate is an external candidate.

Equality Legislation:

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

The school 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 Exams Officer.

Access Arrangements:

As a school for learners with complex needs, we expect that all internal candidates for external examinations will meet the criteria for access arrangements requirement. However, to get access arrangements, we need to apply to the exam boards, for each individual learner.

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

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Officer.

Contingency Planning:

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Leader for Curriculum and Assessment.

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Officer and the Director.

Estimated Grades

Subject Leaders are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer.

Managing Invigilators:

External staff will not be used to invigilate examinations.

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

Malpractice:

The Director in consultation with the Business Manager is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam Days:

The exams officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationary, and materials available for the invigilator.

Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements at least a week in advance.

The 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 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 the session. Papers will be distributed to the Leader for Curriculum and Assessment in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 2 hours after candidates have completed the exam.

After the exam, the Business Manager will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with the Leader of Curriculum and Assessment.

Candidates:

The Subject Leader will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the Teacher.

Work Skills Learnings published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the company accepts no responsibility 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 stationary 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. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time, at the discretion of the Director.

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

The Business Manager is responsible for handling lateness or absence candidates on exam day.

Special Consideration:

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 and/or the candidate's family's responsibility to alert the Director to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 2 days of the exam.

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body before the special consideration deadline.

Internal Assessment:

It is the duty of the Business Manager to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Business Manager will keep 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 teacher. 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 Work Skills Learning Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

Results:

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days:

- By post to their home address

The results slip will be in the form of a company produced document.

Enquiries about Results (EAR):

EARs may be requested by 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 either Work Skills Learning or the parent / carer.

The decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by the Leader of Curriculum and Assessment.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and Work Skills Learning 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 the results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 40 days of the receipt of results.

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

Re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of ATS will be paid by the school.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of the Business Manager.

Certificates:

Candidates will receive their certificates:

- In person at Work Skills Learning as soon as they are received; or
- By individual presentation or presentation day

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.

Work Skills Learning retains certificates for at least two years!

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

This policy statement will be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.

Signed:  Date:

Director:  Date:

Exams Officer: Date: