



THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

School Improvement Committee

Exam Policy

March 2019

Review Date: July 2022

Company No. 07560175

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This policy has been developed to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted effectively and in the best interests of candidates and 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.

The exam policy will be reviewed annually by the Exams Officer.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Heads of faculty, Heads of department, senior leadership team and Exams officer.

Exam Responsibilities

The exams office manager / exams officer manages the administration of public and internal exams and:

- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors 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 publications access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges with budget set by Head of Finance & Administration.
- line manages the senior exam 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
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and 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.

Heads of department/school/curriculum is responsible for:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- 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
- Ensure that exam entry codes and specification are correct before advising Exams Office regarding entries.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangement requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Submission of candidates' names to heads of department/school/curriculum.

The Sen Coordinator SENCo is responsible for:

- 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 - to help candidates achieve their course aims
- Being available to answer the questions or requests of any exam inspection staff.

The Examination administration staff are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and signing of entries
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of School, Heads of Faculty and Senior Leadership Team.

The qualifications offered are Functional skills, BTEC Firsts, GCSE and COPE.

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 of all changes.

Informing the exams office of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the Heads of faculty, Heads of subject and Heads of department, as confirmation of tiers and entry levels for each student.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Parents/Carers, SENCo, Subject teachers, Director of Studies and Head of subject.

Exams, Information for Candidates

Information for candidates, for on-screen tests and written examinations will be placed on the school's website, available through FROG, the school's VLE.

Exam Seasons

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in February (Year 11 mock exams), June (Year 10 exams) and January (Year 9 exams).

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

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Head of School, Head of faculty and Head of department decides which exam series are used in the centre.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the examinations office manager will circulate the exam timetable for Internal exams and External exams.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of faculty.

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via Email and Briefing meeting. Heads of Faculty should be cognisant of subject entry deadlines.

Late entries are authorised by Head of School and Exams officer.

GCSE retakes are not allowed.

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. Thereafter, fees will be born by departmental areas, unless changes are ratified by SLT.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Departments and Candidates.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline/fail to sit an exam/do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Disability Discrimination Act

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006.

The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

'A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA 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 examinations.

The centre will meet the requirements of the DDA by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of centre, Exams officer and SENCo.

Access Arrangements

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 SENCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo, Doctor and Educational psychologist/Specialist teacher.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of both the SENCo and Exams officer.

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 office admin staff in consultation with the SENCo.

Support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCo. Invigilation will be organised by exams office admin staff.

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership team.

Private Candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams officer.

Estimated Grades

Heads of department, Heads of faculty and Heads of subject are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

Managing Invigilators

Support staff and external staff are 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 and 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 are timetabled and briefed by the Exams office.

Invigilators rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

Malpractice

The Exams office is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam Days

The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms in consultation with other users but normally exams will take priority. They will also make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

Site Management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Lead Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Heads of Faculty may choose to assist with those arrangements (admitting students into exam venue).

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted. In practical exams subject teachers may 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 at the end of the exam session.

A relevant subject teacher should be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required.

Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour 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 officer or senior invigilator.

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 officer 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 Officer and the Exams Office Manager.

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 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, for example by providing 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, if the consideration is relevant for application to the exam board.

Internal assessment replaces the largely discontinued term coursework. Heads of departments should prepare exams in 'house format' for reprographic staff to photocopy.

It is the duty of heads of department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams officer 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 and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by Heads of faculty.

Appeals Against Internal Assessments

The Mountbatten School is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assess students' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments should be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity. Students' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the examinations board. Where a set of work is divided between staff, consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation.

If a student feels that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, she/he may make use of this appeals procedure. Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade.

The existence of this procedure is made known to students through Exam Notice Board and via the School website under Exams. This procedure is available from the Examination Officer (Mr G Taylor) and the Exams Secretary (Louise Renny)

Appeals should be made as soon as possible, and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examinations series. (So the appeal must be made before a date in mid-June for the summer series as presently timetabled.

1. Appeals should be made in writing to the Examinations Officer, who will investigate the appeal. If the Examinations Officer was directly involved in the assessment in question, the Head will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation. Likewise if the Examinations Officer is not able to conduct the investigation for some other reason.
2. The Examinations Officer or other member of staff will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed to the requirements of the awarding body and the examinations code of practice of the QCA. This will be done before the end of the series. (Currently the end of June for the summer series).
3. You will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any correspondence with the board, any changes made to the assessment of your work, and any changes made to improve matters in future.
4. 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 Governing body.
5. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Head, and will be logged as a complaint under the complaints procedure. A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally it is moderated by the awarding body (examinations board) to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation frequently changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of The Mountbatten

School and is not covered by this procedure. If you have concerns about it, please ask the Examinations Officer /coordinator for a copy of the appeals procedure of the relevant examinations board.

Results, enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, in person at the centre. Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised by the candidate in writing to do so, and provided they are able to provide proof of identity.

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 Head of centre.

EARs

The process of appealing against results is costly and time-consuming. A request to have a paper re-marked should not be made simply because the mark is on the borderline of two grades.

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidates consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense. In general, appeals against grades of individual students on the C/D borderline will be paid from the school exam budget. All other re-marks, except in exceptional circumstances, are to be paid by the candidate or department budget. The school website displays details of the procedure to be followed, including costs and deadlines.

When the centre does not support a candidate's or parent's request for an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

Sometimes a department may feel that there are grounds for an appeal for the whole cohort, normally based on the marks achieved in one or more components. This may be due to problems with the external marking but also could be due to deficiencies within the department. It is important that the subject leader follows the procedures to obtain and examine students' exam scripts from the relevant components in order to either launch an appeal or learn from the situation and better prepare students in future. If this is being done, parents need to be informed so that they don't waste time and money on individual appeals.

ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results, although candidates need to understand that these scripts are not normally returned for several months.

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

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

Certificates

Certificates are presented in person and posted (first class).

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Head of Centre: Chris Cox

Exam Officer: Gordon Taylor



Policy Agreed

Signed by: Chair of School Improvement Committee

Signed by: Chair of Governors

Date: