

Holme Grange School



Examinations Policy

Examinations Policy

The purpose of this 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 system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff
- to ensure that all aspects of the centre's exam process is documented, supporting the exams contingency plan, and all relevant exams-related policies are signposted
- to ensure that all centre staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- to ensure that all exams and assessments are conducted in accordance with JCQ and awarding body regulations, thus maintaining the integrity and security of the exam/assessment system at all times
- to ensure that exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure that ways of working within the centre are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ regulations, instructions and guidance.

This policy is available on the school website and to parents on request. All relevant information in the policy is communicated to students in the "Exam Candidate Handbook" and directly to parents in the "Parent GCSE Information" document.



School Policy

In line with the general school policy every student should be encouraged to complete examination preparation to the best of their ability. The school is responsible for ensuring that all students have the best possible chances of success in external examinations and that students are not disadvantaged by organisational or curricular failures.

Responsibilities:

Chair of Governors

Governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring that policies and procedures are in place to meet the legal, administrative and logistical requirements for public and internal examinations
- Monitoring examination results and to ensure standards and targets are set

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is the Head of Centre and :

- Has overall responsibility for the school as a public examination centre
- Is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is always compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments. **It is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that all staff comply with the instructions in this booklet.** Failure to do so may constitute malpractice as defined in the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures, 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022*:
 - <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice> (ICE Introduction)
- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - General Regulations for Approved Centres (GR)
 - Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE)
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AA)
 - Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures (SM)
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (NEA) (and the instructions for conducting coursework)
 - A guide to the special consideration process (SC)
- Has responsibility for ensuring that the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements for exams and assessments



- Has responsibility for ensuring that the National Centre Number Register Annual Update is responded to by the end of October confirming they are both aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ regulations and instructions for conducting examinations and ensures that the head of centre's declaration is signed and returned and kept on file for inspection purposes
(This document is kept in the Exams Policy file in the Exams Office)
- Understands that this responsibility cannot be delegated to a member of the senior leadership team or the examinations officer, and acknowledges that failure to respond to the NCNR annual update, and/or the head of centre's declaration, will result in:
 - the centre status being suspended
 - the centre not being able to submit examination entries
 - the centre not receiving or being able to access question papers
- Has responsibility for ensuring the exams officer (EO) receives appropriate support from relevant centre staff and enables the EO to attend appropriate training and other events in order to facilitate the effective delivery of exams and assessments within the centre (as example, EO networking events and relevant events offered by awarding bodies, MIS providers and other external providers)
- Retains a workforce of an appropriate size and competence, including sufficient managerial and other resource, to undertake the delivery of the qualification as required by an awarding body. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications
- Provides fully qualified teachers to mark non-examination assessments, and/or fully qualified assessors for the verification of centre-assessed components
- Responsibility for ensuring that a named member of staff acts as the SENCo
- Has responsibility for ensuring the security within the examination process is managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations
- Has responsibility for ensuring centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process
- Has responsibility for ensuring centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO
- Ensures *“that a teacher who teaches the subject being examined, or a senior member of teaching staff who has had overall responsibility for the candidates preparation for the examination, is not an invigilator during the timetabled written examination or on-screen test...”*
[ICE 12]
- Has responsibility for ensuring confidentiality and security within the examination process is compliant with and managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions including the location of the centre's secure storage facility in a secure room solely assigned to examinations for the purpose of administering secure examination materials appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that confidential materials are only delivered to authorised members of centre staff
access to the secure room and secure storage facility is restricted to the authorised 2-4 keyholders



the relevant awarding body is immediately informed if the security of question papers or confidential supporting instructions is put at risk
that arrangements are in place to check that the correct question paper packets are opened by authorised members of centre staff

- Makes sure that a teacher, a tutor or a senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined, is not an invigilator during an examination
- Delivers qualifications, as required by the awarding body, in accordance with relevant equality legislation. This includes but is not limited to ensuring that qualifications are made available to all candidates capable of undertaking them and seeking reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates
- Enables candidates to receive sufficient and up to date laboratory experience, or relevant training where required by the subject concerned
- Complies with local health and safety rules which are in place and that the centre is adequately covered for public liability claims
- Makes arrangements to receive, check and store question papers and examination material safely and securely at all times and for as long as required in accordance with the current JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- Makes arrangements to receive and issue material received from the awarding bodies to staff and candidates, and notify them of any advice and instructions relevant to the examinations and assessments
- Allows candidates access to relevant pre-release materials on, or as soon as possible after, the date specified by the awarding bodies
- Obtains written approval from the relevant awarding body before permitting a third party to deliver any part of a qualification including assessments
- Takes all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice (which includes maladministration) before, during the course of and after examinations have taken place
- Responsibility for ensuring irregularities are investigated and informs the awarding bodies of any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, are reported to the awarding body immediately
- Responsibility for ensuring risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place (that allow the head of centre to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence)
- Ensures the relevant awarding bodies are informed of any **conflict of interest** where
 - a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at the centre which includes internally assessed components/units (taking at the centre as a last resort where unable to find an alternative centre)
 - a candidate is being taught and prepared for a qualification which includes internally assessed components/units by a member of centre staff with a personal connection to the candidate
- Maintains records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected by the above, and where
 - a member of exams office staff have a personal connection to a candidate being entered for exams and assessments at the centre or at another centre



- a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at the centre which does not include internally assessed components/units (taking at the centre as a last resort where unable to find an alternative centre)
- a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at another centre
- Ensures other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials are briefed on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials
- Ensures members of centre staff do **not** forward e-mails and letters from awarding body or JCQ personnel without prior consent to third parties or upload such correspondence onto social media sites and applications
- Ensures members of centre staff do **not** advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly nor provide them with addresses/email addresses of awarding body examining/assessment or JCQ personnel
- Co-operates with the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, an awarding body or a regulatory authority when subject to an inspection, an investigation or an unannounced visit, and takes all reasonable steps to comply with all requests for information or documentation made by an awarding body or regulatory authority as soon as is practical
- Allows all venues used for examinations and assessments, paperwork and secure storage facilities to be open to inspection
- Understands the JCQ Centre Inspector will identify him/herself with a photo ID card and must be accompanied throughout his/her tour of the premises, including inspection of the centre's secure storage facility
- Has responsibility for ensuring that there is a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration
SEE EXAMINATION CONTINGENCY POLICY
- Has responsibility for ensuring internal appeals procedures are in place
SEE INTERNAL APPEALS PROCEDURE POLICY
- Has responsibility for ensuring that a disability policy for exams showing the centre's compliance with relevant legislation is in place
SEE DISABILITY POLICY (EXAMS)
- Has responsibility for ensuring that a complaints and appeals procedure covering general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification is in place
SEE COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE
- Has responsibility for ensuring that there is a Child Protection/Safeguarding policy in place
SEE SCHOOL CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING POLICY
- Has responsibility for ensuring that the centre has a data protection policy in place
SEE SCHOOL DATA PROTECTION POLICY
- Has responsibility for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice (JCQ document 'Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments')



Examinations Officer

The Examinations Officer has the responsibility for managing the administration of public and internal examinations. The Examinations Officer:

- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - General Regulations for Approved Centres**
 - Instructions for Conducting Examinations**
 - Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures**
 - Post-results services (PRS)**
 - A guide to the special consideration process**
- Completes/submits the National Centre Number Register annual update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR <https://ocr.org.uk/administration/ncn-annual-update/>) by the end of October each year
- Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- Ensures key tasks are undertaken and key dates and deadlines met
- Recruits, trains and deploys a team of internal/external invigilators; appoints lead invigilators, as required and keeps a record of the content of training provided to invigilators for the required period
- Works with the SENCo to ensure invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates and those acting as a facilitator supporting access arrangement candidates fully understand the respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room
- Supports the head of centre in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed (where required) of any conflict of interest declared by members of centre staff and in maintaining records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected before the published deadline for entries for each examination series
- Briefs other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials
- Advises the SMT and HOD's on annual exam timetables and application procedures
- Produces and distributes to staff and candidates a calendar for all exams
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Informs HOD's of the deadlines for controlled assessments/coursework etc.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts according to JCQ and awarding body requirements.
- Administers access arrangements in examinations
- Identifies and manages timetable clashes
- Accounts for income and expenditure relating to exam costs/charges
- Organises invigilator training and keeping records of this training
- Returns controlled assessment/coursework and any other material required by the appropriate exam boards correctly and on schedule



- Ensures that awarding bodies are notified before the entries are submitted, where a candidate is being taught and prepared for examinations and assessments by a relative, or where a relative of exams office staff is being entered for examinations or assessments
- Supports the head of centre in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed of any declaration/conflict of interest involving candidates and relevant members of centre staff before the published deadline for entries
- Briefs other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials

Senior Management (SMT)

- Are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - General regulations for approved centres**
 - Instructions for conducting examinations**
 - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments**
 - Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments**
 - Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments** (and the instructions for conducting coursework)

SEN Coordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO:

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
 - [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)
- Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as ‘access arrangements’)
- If not the qualified access arrangements assessor, works with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and ensures the correct procedures are followed
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor’s qualification
- Providing additional support where required
- Producing an “Access Arrangements in Examinations” folder per candidate giving details of
 - Access arrangements
 - Evidence collected to show normal way of working
 - Assessment information to support the access arrangements



Head of department (HoD)

- Ensures teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Ensures teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Ensures teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Teaching staff

- Undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Keep updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Attend relevant awarding body training and update events

Invigilators

- Exam invigilators are responsible for ensuring they conduct examinations according to examination board regulations and that they work to current guidelines.
- They must have had induction training and regarding examinations and health and safety.
- They must sign a confidentiality and security agreement and confirm whether they have any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions applied to them.
- Exam invigilators should be in the examination room in good time and fully prepared for the examination taking place. **(SEE INVIGILATION POLICY)**

Reception staff

- Support the EO in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials and follow the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials

Site staff (Estates Management)

- Support the EO in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources

Candidates

Students taking examinations have a responsibility to:

- Confirm their examination entries
- Check and follow the examination timetable
- Read and understand the “Exam Candidate Handbook”



- Understand that the school rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and use of mobile phones and electronic devices apply at all times
- Understand that disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Be aware that candidates may leave the examination room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the examination room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them
- Know that the Examinations Officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an examination and will deal with them in accordance to JCQ guidelines

Qualifications

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre.

The qualifications offered are GCSE, IGCSE, BTEC, Functional Skills and NCFE qualifications.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with HOD's.

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of Department. Candidates or parents/carers cannot authorise a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

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

Exam Fees

GCSE/IGCSE/BTEC/Functional Skills entry exam fees are paid by the candidate.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the candidate.

Equality Act 2010

All exam centre staff must ensure that the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) are met.



Access arrangements

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam. The SENCo will then inform individual staff of any special arrangements required for the candidate during the course and in the exam.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCo.

SENCo will assess candidates to identify access arrangements requirements.

SENCo will apply for approval through Access Arrangements Online (AAO) where required.

SENCo will keep a folder for each candidate with access arrangements containing evidence and relevant paperwork for JCQ inspection purposes.

SENCo will review centre policy on the use of word processors in exams and assessments
SEE WORD PROCESSOR POLICY

SENCo in liaison with the Exams Officer will ensure criteria for candidates granted separate invigilation within the centre is clear and meets JCQ regulations and best meets the needs of individual candidates and remaining candidates in main exam rooms.

Invigilation and rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

Contingency Planning

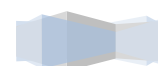
Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team. **SEE EXAM CONTINGENCY POLICY.**

Technical Support

Data are secured by Windows network. Every single user has a password and it must be used for access to particular data. General access has got only network administrators and head teacher (4 people).

Our servers and key infrastructure points (modems, switches) are backed up by UPS power sources. They allow use of network services in case of power failure of approx. 30 mins. All of the servers have multilevel data backup. The most frequent is 2x in a day and total backup on to external drives every night. The external drives have mirroring and they are placed in different buildings to the servers.

An Internet connection is secured by firewall and Open DNS service. We also have 4 BT broadband separate lines and one backup line from another provider. We have got a plenty of printers on network and several of them are able to print locally (USB), which gives us the opportunity to print anything at any time. We also have ready empty USB sticks to transfer data without network connection.



External IT Service Company provides 2x 2 hours on site service per week and remote service at any time.

Malpractice

The SMT is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice in line with JCQ regulations and the school policy.

Invigilators

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the SLT.
Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams officer.
All invigilators are trained annually.
(See Invigilation Handbook)

Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and use of mobile phones and other electronic devices apply at all times.

Briefing candidates

Candidates will be briefed before the exams and will be issued with a Candidate Handbook.
(SEE CANDIDATE HANDBOOK)

Exams officer

- Issues individual exam timetable information to candidates and informs candidates of any designated contingency day awarding bodies may identify in the event of national or significant local disruption to exams
- Prior to exams issues relevant JCQ information for candidates documents
- Where relevant, issues relevant awarding body information to candidates
- Issues centre exam information to candidates including information on:
 - exam timetable clashes
 - arriving late for an exam
 - absence or illness during exams
 - what equipment is/is not provided by the centre
 - food and drink in exam rooms
 - unauthorised items in exam rooms
 - when and how results will be issued and the staff that will be available
 - the post-results services and how the centre deals with requests from candidates

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ and School policy guidelines.

The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.



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

Security of exam materials

Exams officer:

- Confirms appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that confidential materials are only handed over to those authorised by the head of centre
- Ensures only persons authorised by the head of centre and the exams officer are allowed access to the centre's secure storage facility as one of the two to six key holders
- Has a process in place to demonstrate the receipt, secure movement and secure storage of confidential exam materials within the centre
- Ensures a log is kept at the initial point of delivery recording confidential materials received and signed for by authorised staff within the centre and that appropriate arrangements are in place for confidential materials to be immediately transferred to the secure storage facility until they can be removed from the dispatch packaging and checked in the secure room before being returned to the secure storage facility in timetable order
- Ensures the secure storage facility contains only current and live confidential material (ensuring that past examination question papers and internal tests or mock exams are not kept in the centre's secure storage facility)
- Ensures that examination stationery, e.g. answer booklets and formula booklets are stored in the secure room (attempting to store this material in the secure storage facility, when sufficient space allows)
- Ensures the integrity and security of any electronic question paper is maintained during the downloading, printing and collating process (ensuring printing is carried out in an area that can be controlled to prevent unauthorised personnel accessing live assessment materials and ensuring only authorised members of centre staff have access to electronic question papers)

Reception staff

- Follow the process to log confidential materials delivered to/received by the centre to the point materials are issued to authorised staff for transferal to the secure storage facility

Teaching staff

- Adhere to the process to record the secure movement of confidential materials taken from or returned to secure storage throughout the time the material is confidential



Special Consideration

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 and the Exams Officer, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam. The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form or apply online to the relevant awarding body within the necessary time frame in accordance with the JCG regulations on special consideration.

Senior leaders

Provide signed evidence to support eligible applications for special consideration

Exams officer

Processes eligible applications for special consideration to awarding bodies

Gathers evidence which may need to be provided by other staff in centre or candidates

Submits requests to awarding bodies to the external deadline

Candidates

Provide appropriate evidence to support special consideration applications, where required

Internal Assessments and Appeals

The School has separate documents entitled "Policy on Controlled Assessments" and "Examination Appeals Procedure"

Accessing results

Head of centre

- Ensures results are kept entirely confidential and restricted to key members of staff until the official dates and times of release of results to candidates
- Understands that it is not permitted to withhold provisional results from candidates under any circumstances

Exams officer

- Informs candidates in advance of when and how results will be released to them for each exam series
- Accesses results from awarding bodies under restricted release of results, where this is provided by the awarding body
- Resolves any missing or incomplete results with awarding bodies
- Issues statements of results to candidates on issue of results date
- Provides summaries of results for relevant centre staff on issue of results date



Post-results services

Head of centre

- Ensures an **internal appeals procedure** is available where candidates disagree with any centre decision not to support a clerical check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal
- Understands that in the event of an awarding body initiating an *extended review of marking*, candidates' marks and subject grades may be lowered, confirmed or raised
- Ensures that senior members of centre staff are available immediately after the publication of results

Exams officer

- Provides information to candidates (including private candidates) and staff on the services provided by awarding bodies and the fees charged (see also above *Briefing candidates* and *Access to scripts, reviews of results and appeals procedures*)
- Publishes internal deadlines for requesting the services to ensure the external deadlines can be effectively met
- Provides a process to record requests for services and collect candidate informed consent (**after** the publication of results) and fees where relevant
- Submits requests to awarding bodies to meet the external deadline
- Tracks requests to conclusion and informs candidates and relevant centre staff of outcomes
- Updates centre results information, where applicable

Teaching staff

- Meet internal deadlines to request the services and gain relevant candidate informed consent
- Identify the budget to which fees should be charged

Candidates

- Meet internal deadlines to request the services
- Provide informed consent and fees, where relevant

Certificates

Certificates will be posted (recorded delivery) or collected and signed for. Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so. The Centre will retain certificates for five years.

Written	September 2015	
Reviewed	September 2016	CK
Reviewed	January 2018	CK
Reviewed	April 2019	CK
(No policy review in 2020 as GCSE and all other public exams were cancelled)		
Reviewed	January 2021	CK
Reviewed	November 2021	CK

