

EXAMS POLICY

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Headteacher: **Mr M. J. Wilkes**, *CertEd, DipLM, NPQH*

St Michael's Church of England High School • Rowley Learning Campus • Curral Road • Rowley Regis • West Midlands • B65 9AN

Telephone: **0121 561 6881** • Fax: 0121 561 6882 • email: contact.staff@st-michaels.sandwell.sch.uk

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1. The 11-16 Exam Policy

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates
- To ensure the operation of an efficient 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 every year

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre, Senior Leadership Team, Exams Officer and Governors

Exam Responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school/college as an exam centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- Reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice to the exam board. Refer to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.
- Follows all JCQ exam regulations

Exams Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams;

- 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
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Produces and distributes timetables to candidates for all internal / external exams and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of the rules and regulations set by the JCQ and St Michaels CE High School.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries to the awarding bodies.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Advises on appeals and re-marks. Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates
- Reporting all suspicious or actual incidents of malpractice in accordance with the JCQ "Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments" handbook.

Deputy Head

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4.
- Being familiar with JCQ Instructions for conducting controlled assessments.

Heads of department:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Ensuring exam entries/registrations are completed within the deadlines set by the Exams Office.
- Ensuring the Exams Office is notified by July each year of any changes in the exam board or syllabus for their subject.
- Ensuring that any official exam board internal assessments/controlled coursework are conducted in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- 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
- Involvement with post-results procedures.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidate names to heads of department / faculty.
- Ensuring that any official exam board internal assessments/controlled coursework are conducted in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

The SEN Co-ordinator SENCO is overall responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Processing applications for access arrangements online within the deadlines set by the awarding bodies in accordance with the JCQ "Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration" handbook
- Ensuring that testing/assessments conducted are processed online and the outcomes made available to the Exams Office and all teaching staff before the candidates are due to sit their exams/controlled assessments.
- 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.
- Additional support for the exam invigilation team to be available (see also section 7: Access Arrangements)

Invigilators

Making the necessary announcements at the beginning and end of exams

- The effective and efficient conduct of the exams
- Supervision of candidates in the exam room.
- 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 their return to the Exams Office.
- Being familiar with the contents of the JCQ Instructions for conducting examinations for the current year and the JCQ regulations
- Displaying all JCQ notices/warnings to candidates

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and checking of statements of entry and individual timetables
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework/controlled assessment as their own.
- Reading notices/warnings to candidates and following the rules and regulations set by St Michaels CE High School & JCQ for all examinations

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- Checking with their child to see that the correct exam entries are made and signing the confirmation slip to the Exams Office
- Checking that the correct tier of entry is made
- Ensuring their child attends exams as detailed on their exam timetable and is familiar with the rules and regulations set by St Michaels CE High School & JCQ for all examinations.

2. Qualifications

- The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre and the Senior Leadership Team.
- The qualifications offered are GCSE & BTEC and the subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year.
 - Informing the Exams Officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the

Heads of Department

- The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year.
- All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.
- Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with candidates/parents/guardians, subject teachers, Heads of Department and Head of Centre.

3. Exam Seasons and Timetables

Exam seasons

- Internal exams are scheduled in November & January.
- External exams are scheduled in November, January, May and June.
- All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.
- Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre
- On-demand assessments are to be scheduled in agreement with Senior Leadership Team and the Exams Office.

Timetables Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for external/internal exams to all relevant parties.

4. Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Entries

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the heads of department and the subject teachers.
- Candidates, or parents, cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.
- The centre accepts external entries from former candidates only.
- Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via email.
- Late entries are authorised by heads of department and Exams Officer.

5. Exam Fees

GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre or Department according to circumstances as determined by the Examinations Officer.

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.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.

(See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

6. The Disability & Equality

. The Head of Centre must ensure that the Centre meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED) 2010.

. 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 normal day-to-day activities.

. The Centre will meet the disability provisions under the DDA (or the Equality Act 2010), by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of Centre.

7. Special Educational Needs

Subject teachers should advise the SENCO at the start of year 9 of any pupils who are on a course leading to an examination, and the dates of their examinations, including modular examinations.

It is the responsibility of the SENCO to liaise with the Examinations Officer about the arrangements for candidates with Special Educational Needs. The SENCO will ensure the Examinations Officer is provided with all relevant documentation for Access Arrangements for each candidate with special educational needs.

The SENCO is responsible for relevant testing and assessment of Access Arrangements that might be applied. The SENCO will ensure all requests for Access Arrangements are sent to the appropriate boards and process the replies.

The SENCO is responsible for notification of access arrangements in writing to parent(s)/guardian(s)

It is the responsibility of the Examination Officer to provide a separate room and invigilator for an individual or small group of candidates that require a reader/scribe.

It is the responsibility of the SENCO to allocate a suitable member of staff to support the candidate e.g. to read/scribe/etc.

Information of any candidates with Access Arrangements e.g. extra time, must be available to the invigilator in the examination room and recorded on the official seating plan.

8. Access Arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO and the Examinations Officer.

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 Examinations Officer.

It is the responsibility of the Examination Officer to liaise with the IT Support to provide Word Processors/Laptops for candidates with relevant Access Arrangements. Spell check and internet facility must be disabled in accordance with JCQ Instructions

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the Examinations Officer.

9. Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and the Senior Leadership Team.

10. Managing Invigilators and Exam Days

Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision.

They will be used for all Examinations.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Criminal Records Bureau - CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Head Teacher's PA.

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.

Exam days

The Examinations 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 is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The Exam Officer/lead invigilator will start all Examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff, if available, should be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions are to be attempted. 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 may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties, but may not assist with suggestions eg of use of colour, materials or method.

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 24 hours after the end of the exam session once all candidates have completed.

11. Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration

Candidates

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

The JCQ's published rules on acceptable behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times. (See Appendix B)

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. The School will send a letter home to any student who is disruptive in external exams or mock exams.

Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of the exam staff must accompany them at all times.

The Examinations Officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines. The Examinations Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on the exam day.

Clash candidates

The Examinations Officer and external invigilators will be responsible as necessary for supervising candidates with exam clashes. Overnight supervision as necessary and in accordance with the JCQ rules and regulations

Special consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 5 days of the exam, for example by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

13. Examinations Internal Appeals Procedure.

Controlled Assessment/Coursework and BTEC Assessments

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date. It is the duty of the Heads of Dept to ensure that all internal/controlled assessments are conducted within the set deadlines and in accordance with the rules and regulations set by JCQ

Heads of department will ensure all internal / controlled assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time and the Examinations Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the Examinations Office by the heads of department.

Appeals Against Internal Assessments

The JCQ requires the centre to publish a separate procedure relating to internal assessment decisions, which is available from the Exams Office.

The main points are:

- Appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- Candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- Appeals should be made in writing by 31st May to the head of centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- The head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Examinations Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

(See Appendix D) 14.

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

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre / by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae).

Arrangements for the school 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 Examinations Officer.

EARs – EXTERNALLY MARKED UNITS

Following the issue of results, candidates may wish to see a copy of their script or ask for their script to be re-marked

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

When the centre does not uphold 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.

Non-priority scripts and re-marks are available for four weeks after the publication of results.

Following a re-mark, unit marks and grades may be raised, stay the same or be lowered.

Fees and deadlines will be published for these services and are issued to HODs before results day and available from the exams office following each results day. Not all services are available for all subjects and/or levels

(See section 5: Exam fees)

ATS – ACCESS TO SCRIPTS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within the deadlines set by the awarding bodies.

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

15. Malpractice

‘Malpractice’ means any act, default or practice which is a breach of the Regulations or which:

- compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate; and/or
- Damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or Centre, any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre.

A failure by a centre to investigate allegations of suspected malpractice in accordance with the requirements of the Joint Council for Qualifications also constitutes malpractice. The centre will investigate and report to the appropriate awarding body all cases of suspected malpractice in accordance with the Joint Council’s policies and procedures.

Where malpractice is discovered in external examinations, then the appropriate procedure as set out by the awarding body or examining body (Joint Council for Qualification) will be followed by the school.

Malpractice associated with external examination for the purposes of this policy includes the following:

- Unlawfully obtaining, selling, using or distributing examination papers prior to exam sessions
- The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices during exams
- The passing of information between students during an examination
- Taking unauthorised material into the examination room

Where malpractice is discovered in coursework, then the appropriate Head of Department will discuss the matter with the Head of Centre and the Examinations Officer. The action taken will depend on the severity of the malpractice that has taken place.

- In some circumstances, candidates will be required to re-submit the work.]
- In some circumstances, the work will be destroyed and not entered for assessment. This will reduce the grade available to the candidate.
- In extreme circumstances, the incident will be reported to the relevant awarding body.

Where malpractice in coursework is discovered by the awarding body, then the awarding body will follow their own malpractice procedures. (Details of these procedures can be found in the JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments document).

All candidates must be aware that the awarding body has the right to invalidate any qualifications awarded by them to the candidate if malpractice is discovered.

a) In addition, awarding bodies will report malpractice to the JCQ who may invalidate all qualifications awarded by all awarding Bodies.

b) Candidates must therefore ensure that malpractice does not take place at any stage during the examination and assessment process.

JCQ Malpractice Document can be found here: (Note that this document is revised every year).

<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/suspected-malpractice-in-examinations-and-assessments-2013-2014>

16. Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party over age of 18, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

The centre retains certificates for 12 months.

Lost Certificates can be requested from the relevant exam boards. A transcript of results for this service.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This exam policy will be reviewed every year. This exam policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre and the Examinations Officer.

Linked Policies/Documents

Suspected Malpractice Form (See Appendix A)

JCQ Notices and Warnings to Candidates (See Appendix B)

Controlled Assessment policy

Appendix A

Centre Number 20651

St Michaels CE High School

External Examinations Suspected Malpractice

Please use this form for reporting Candidates not abiding by the rules as set down by the JCQ.

Date:

Start time of
Exam

Exam
Subject

Component
Number

Name of
Candidate

Candidate
Number

Time of
Incident

Seat
Number

Name of
Invigilator

Incident

Please
Tick

Outcome

Continued Talking after 2 warnings

Disrupting the exam

Mobile Phone – On person

Mobile Phone – In bag ringing

Walked out of the Exam

Other: please specify

Please ask the candidate to write a statement on the reverse of this form and then complete your report.

Yvonne Wilcox

Examinations Officer

Candidate's Statement Please tick box if candidate refused to make a statement []

Candidates Signature:

Name of Invigilator: _____

Invigilator's Report

Invigilator Signature:

Appendix C

LETTER SENT TO PARENTS IN CASES OF STUDENTS BEING DISRUPTIVE IN INTERNAL MOCK EXAMS OR EXTERNAL EXAMS

Parents of students who have shown an inability to abide by normal examination conditions and regulations will be asked either to pay for the cost of an individual external invigilator which will mean that the student will take the examination in an individual room with an external invigilator or sit in the examination room with their child with an external invigilator and possibly other students in order to ensure that their child abides by normal examination conditions and regulations

Appendix D

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT APPEALS POLICY

(Point 16 of the Examinations Policy refers)

1. Policy on Internal Assessments for Qualifications

In accordance with the OFQUAL Code of Practice for the conduct of external qualifications, the centre is committed to ensuring that:

- Staff have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills conduct internal assessments.
- Assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant specifications for each subject.
- The consistency of internal assessment is assured through internal standardisation as set out by the Awarding Bodies.
- Staff responsible for internal standardisation and/or assessment attends any compulsory training sessions.

2. Appeals Procedure – Coursework and Controlled Assessment

- The grounds for appeal relate only to the procedures used in arriving at internal assessment decisions or the production of externally assessed work and do not apply to the marking judgments themselves.
- The appeal must be made in writing to the Examinations Officer by 31st May of the year that the coursework was assessed. The grounds for the appeal must be clearly stated. The candidate can be supported in the presentation of their case by a parent/carer/friend.
- The Head of Centre will nominate a senior member of staff to lead the enquiry. An experienced Curriculum Team Leader, the Examinations Officer and a Centre Governor to act as an independent member may also be on the panel.
- The panel will examine the evidence for the procedures used in the assessment, decide upon their appropriateness and that the procedures have been properly followed as required by the Awarding Body concerned. The enquiry will be completed by the end of June of that examination series.

- The panel's findings will be formally reported back to the candidate/parent/carer at the beginning of July.
- Records of the request for the appeal, the evidence, deliberations of the panel and result will be kept by the Examinations Officer and made available to the Awarding Body if required.

3. Appeals Procedure – Written Examinations

Each Awarding Body publishes procedures for appeals against its decisions.

After the release of examination results, a candidate has the right to apply to the awarding body, through the centre, for a review of their result if they consider the grade to be too low. This review is termed an Enquiry about Results (EAR) and is applied for by the centre on behalf of the candidate. Candidates should be aware that this process may result in a lowering of the grade awarded. Candidates are responsible for the payment of Awarding Body fees at the time of applying. Curriculum areas may assist candidates with this cost if it is felt there is just cause for appeal. In most cases candidates are encouraged to discuss the result with their subject teacher before a final decision is made. Candidates should contact the Examinations Officer in the first instance to discuss the process in more detail.

4. Statement for Candidates

If at any stage during your examination courses you have concerns about procedures used in assessing your internally marked work for public examinations (e.g. coursework/controlled assessments/portfolio/projects) you should see the Examinations Officer, as soon as possible

Head of Centre/Examinations Officer

Date

GCSE Examination Contingency Plan

If there are timetabled examinations scheduled on a day when I have decided that the school should be closed to staff and students, the: "GCSE Examination Contingency Plan" position will be adopted. The school has a team of staff (the Contingency Team) who, should conditions allow, are able to come to school to ensure that timetabled exams may go ahead. In such an eventuality, the school as an examination centre will only open to candidates sitting timetabled GCSE examinations. In order that the school can ensure the correct administration of exams, the contingency team has to include the exams officer or a suitably trained member of leadership team. If these members of staff are not able to get into school the scheduled exam(s) will not run. In line with JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) guidance, the school will endeavour to be open and, where conditions allow, timetabled examinations will go ahead. Advice and recommendations from the JCQ state:

"Wherever possible, the examinations should be conducted according to the centre's published examination timetable" and "it is important to note that rescheduling the examinations is not an option due to the consequences that it would have across the system"

In the event that weather is adverse and the school is closed on a day of a scheduled public examination I will assess the possibility of key staff being able to attend. If I am confident that key staff are able to be in attendance and that the exam will run. Our school website will be updated to show timetabled examinations are still going ahead and advising of any revised start times. Start times may be delayed for morning exams if a number of candidates are late (permission will be sought from relevant awarding bodies). All candidates are expected to make the effort to come in and sit their examination. The decisions regarding travelling to school for an exam rest with individual families taking consideration of the weather and road conditions locally to them. If a youngster is unable to get into school on an exam day as a result of inclement weather, it is imperative that families write to me as soon as possible to explain that this has occurred. Any family wanting more information about this process should contact our Examinations Officer, Mrs Wilcox. Where I take a decision that the school has to shut, as it is unsafe to open, we would notify the exam board that we had been unable to run the exams that were scheduled for that day.

