

GOSFORTH ACADEMY EXAM POLICY

Contents

1. Exam responsibilities
2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered
3. Exam seasons and timetables
4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes
5. Exam fees
6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements
7. Managing invigilators and exam days
8. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration
9. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments
10. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)
11. Certificates

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.

This exam policy will be reviewed annually.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the Senior Lead – Curriculum, Exams Manager, and the Trustees.

1. Exam responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and reviews of marking
- the Head of Centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments and that all of the correct procedures are followed (GR 5.4; AA 7)

Director of Performance

Oversees the running of the exams process and analysis of exam results:

- prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made

Exams Manager

Manages the administration of public and internal exams:

- advises the SST, leaders of teaching and learning, subject teachers, class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, trustees 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, and Non - Examination Assessment 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 in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- submits candidates' marks for coursework and Non - Examination Assessment. Tracks and dispatches coursework and Non – Examination Assessment correctly and on schedule. Stores returned coursework and any other material returned by the appropriate awarding bodies. Returns work to teaching staff after the deadline for ROR's and ROM's.
- 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

Leaders of Teaching and Learning

- 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, controlled assessment and Non - Examination Assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Manager

- The Head of Centre is responsible for having a process to check the qualifications of the centre assessors and that the correct procedures are followed. A copy of the centre assessors qualifications are kept with the exam access arrangement evidence in the Student Support Base (GR 5.4; AA7)
- effective communication of exam information to departments and co-ordination of department staff

Teachers

- notification of students' needs regarding access arrangements to SENCO (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- submission of candidate names and entry details to Leaders of Teaching and Learning.

SENCO

- administration of access arrangements.
- identification and arranging for 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.

Lead invigilator/invigilators

- collection of exam papers and other material from the Exam block before the start of the exam
- to start and finish exams
- Identify students - Lower school students will be identified by the photo on their exam card or a year group book of names and photos supplied by the exams office. Post 16 students will be identified by their ID badges. They should remove them from their holder and put face up on the corner of their exam desk. External students are required to bring photographic ID and will be identified by exams office staff before being escorted to the exam room. All external candidates have previously been on role with Gosforth Academy (GR 5.13)
- make a list of absent students to give to roaming invigilators outside the exam venue so they can be contacted
- reading out the 'Suggested wording for the announcement at the beginning of an examination'
- complete attendance register
- collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.

Candidates

- confirmation of entries
- understanding coursework, and Non - Examination Assessment regulations. They have to sign a declaration that authenticates the coursework and NEA as their own.
- understanding and adhering to the procedures and regulations as published in the information for candidates notices produces by JCQ.

Administrative staff

- preparation of exam rooms.
- preparation of exam boxes.
- posting of exam papers.

2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this Centre are decided by the Principal, Senior Lead – Curriculum, Leaders of Teaching and Learning and the senior leadership team.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, A levels, BTEC, CTEC, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals Vocational Awards and CACHE. The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for both KS4 and Post 16 for that year. If there is to be a change of syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed as soon as possible.

3. Exam seasons and timetables

3.1 Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled mainly in December, January, February, April and summer.

External exams are scheduled in November, January and June, plus ad hoc online exams throughout the year.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the Centre is decided by the Principal, Leaders of Teaching and Learning and the senior leadership team.

3.2 Timetables

The Exams Manager will create and circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed.

4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Leaders of Teaching and Learning and the subject teachers.

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

Former students may be allowed to retake an exam as an external candidate subject to consultation with the Director of Post 16 and the Exams Manager.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Leaders of Teaching and Learning via email. Late entries are authorised by Leaders of Teaching and Learning and Exams Manager.

5. Exam fees

GCSE, AS/A level and vocational qualifications' initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre unless it is a resit. This must be paid by the candidate.

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.

Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework and controlled assessment requirements.

GCE Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates.

GCSE retake fees will depend on the subject and grade originally achieved, details of who is responsible for payment are available on request from the exams office.

Candidates are normally responsible for a review of marking fee.

Candidates must pay the fee for a review of marking, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry.

Vocational subject retake fees are paid by the centre.

6. The Equality Act 2010, special needs and access arrangements

6.1 Equality Act 2010

The equality act 2010 extends to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

6.2 Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO and the educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

The SENCO will liaise with subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam. The SENCO can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the exam.

6.3 Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO and the Exams Manager.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO with the Exams Manager. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the Exams Manager.

7. Managing invigilators and exam days

7.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision. They will be used for all internal and external exams.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the centre administration.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (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 centre administration.

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

7.2 Exam days

The Exams Manager will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilators.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms as directed by the Exams Manager. The lead invigilator will be required to start and finish exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by anyone or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Leaders of Teaching and Learning after all the students within the centre have completed the paper and they have been checked for dispatch. This includes all clash candidates of overnight supervisions.

8. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

8.1 Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all 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 regulations.

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

8.2 Clash candidates

The Exams Manager will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision.

8.3 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.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Exams Manager will then forward an online application for special consideration to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

9. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments

9.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date. Leaders of Teaching and Learning will ensure all coursework is ready for dispatch at the correct time and the Exams Manager will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

9.2 Appeals against internal assessments

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the Gosforth Academy website.

10. Results, Reviews of marking and access to scripts (ATS)

10.1 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 Exams Manager.

10.2 Reviews of marking

RORs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

Candidates are normally responsible for payment of and ROR fee.

Written consent must be given by the candidates prior to an ROR being instigated.

When the centre does not uphold an ROR or an appeal following an ROR, a candidate may still request to have an enquiry carried out. The candidate will be responsible for the fee.

The Exams Manager is responsible for ROR applications. (See section 5: Exam fees)

10.3 ATS

After release of GCE results, candidates may ask for a priority copy of their script. The application must be made within 1 week of the release of results. A review of marking may still be requested after the script is returned.

After release of GCE & GCSE results, candidates may ask for a copy script to support teaching and learning. The application must be made before the Awarding body deadline. The script will not be returned before the ROR deadline. Once this request has been made, an application for a review of marking cannot be processed.

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

If a result is queried, the Exams Manager, teaching staff and Principal will investigate the feasibility of asking for a review of marking at the centre's expense.

GCSE reviews of marking cannot be applied for once a script has been returned. All requests for RORs and ATS must be made via the Exam Manager.

11. Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have written authorisation to do so. The person collecting the certificates must be named in the letter of authorisation and bring photographic ID

Certificates are not withheld from candidates who owe fees.

18 October 2022

Date approved:

Signed:

September 2023

Date to be reviewed: