



## Public Examinations Policy

This policy applies to all pupils and staff of Abbot's Hill, involved in the preparation and sitting of Public Examinations.

### 1. The purpose of this Examination Policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of examinations is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates and in line with the requirements of the examination boards.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient examination system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.
- To provide a contingency plan for examination days.
- It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the Centre's examination processes to read, understand and implement this policy. This examination policy will be reviewed annually by the Examinations Officer, Deputy Head and SENCO.

### 2. Examination responsibilities

2.1 The Examinations Officer, acting on behalf of the Head of Centre, has responsibility for the School as an examination centre. The Examinations Officer:

- advises on appeals and re-marks in consultation with Heads of Department
- is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. (Refer to the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments*.)

### 3. Examinations Officer

- Manages the administration of public examinations and the analysis of examination results.
- Advises the senior management team, subject teachers, form tutors and relevant support staff on annual examination timetables and application procedures as set by the examination boards, AQA, Edexcel, OCR and BCS
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all examinations 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 examination timetable that will affect them.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework / NEAs are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ/BCS guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries as required.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all examination papers and completed scripts.
- Makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ/BCS Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations.
- Identifies and manages examination timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all examination costs/charges including invigilation costs.
- Line manages the training of examinations invigilators and is responsible for the conduct of examinations.
- Submits candidates' coursework / NEA marks, tracks despatched and returned coursework.

- Arranges for dissemination of examination results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with Heads of Department, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their examinations.

#### **4. Heads of Department**

- Provide guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about examination entries or amendments to entries or tiers of entry.
- Submit estimated grades to the Examinations Officer when requested.
- Accurately complete coursework / NEA mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurately complete entry and all other mark sheets and adhere to deadlines as set by the Examinations Officer.
- Are involved in post-results procedures.

#### **5. SENCO**

- Advises the Examinations Officer of the needs of candidates' access arrangements and processes these online.
- Is responsible for the identification and testing of candidates requirements for access arrangements.
- Is responsible for the provision of additional support to help candidates achieve their course aims.

#### **6. Invigilators**

- Are responsible for examination papers, candidates and rooms as directed by the Examinations Officer, school rules and the JCQ/BCS regulations. Leading invigilator completes seating plans and starts the examinations in accordance with JCQ/BCS guidelines.

#### **7. Candidates**

- Are responsible for understanding examination and coursework / NEA regulations and attend examinations on time.

#### **8. Tests and qualifications offered**

- The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSEs, the Level 3 Award in Algebra and ECDL.
- The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the Year 9 Options Booklet for that year.
- If there has been a change of syllabus from the previous year, the Examinations Office must be informed by October of the academic year of the examination.
- Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidate, parents/carers, SENCO, subject teachers, Head of Department and the Deputy Head.

### **Examination seasons, timetables and management**

#### **9. Examination Seasons:**

- External examinations are usually scheduled in November (for resits), and May/June; certain components such as coursework / NEAs, will be taken as directed by the Head of Department at other times.

## **10. Timetables:**

- Once confirmed, the Examinations Officer will circulate the examination timetables for external examinations.

## **11. Examination Days:**

- The Examinations Officer will book all examination rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, examination stationery and materials available for the invigilators.
- Premises team are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.
- The leading invigilator will start all examinations in accordance with JCQ/BCS guidelines.
- Subject teachers may be present outside the examination room at the start of the examination to assist with identification of candidates.
- In practical examinations, subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.
- Examination papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the examination room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to Heads of Department after a period of 24 hours after the end of examination.
- A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the examination, if required.

## **Entries, entry details, late entries and fees**

### **12. Entries:**

- Candidates are selected for their examination entries and tier of entry by the Heads of Department.
- The Centre only accepts external entries from former candidates if special arrangement has been made through the Headmistress.

### **13. Late Entries:**

- Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department via email. The entries are reprinted in hard copy and the Head of Department is asked to check and sign these before they are made.
- Late entries are authorised by the Heads of Department.

### **14. Fees:**

- All normal examination entry fees are billed to the parents
- Late entry or amendment fees are billed to:
  - o parents if it is their direction for a change (written permission to be obtained)
  - o departments – if it is their direction.

## **The equality act, special needs and access arrangements**

### **15. Equality Act:**

15.1 The Equality Act 2010 extends to general qualifications. All examination Centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

### **16. Special Needs:**

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

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

### **17. Training Invigilators:**

17.1 Update meetings are held in January for established invigilators in which they are made aware of the Equality Act 2010 and trained in disability issues. A second meeting is held nearer the examination period with the lead invigilator to discuss updates on individual pupils and what their specific requirements are. The update meetings address the policies and procedures in place and attention is drawn to how this relates to specific candidates with a disability. Meetings are led by the Examinations Officer.

### **18. BCS ECDL Invigilators:**

18.1 Where the Awarding Body requires it, the Centre (School) will observe all new Invigilators on their first invigilation of an assessment related to the qualification overseen by that Awarding Body and annually thereafter. These observations shall be recorded using the Awarding Body supplied form and completed forms will then be retained for audit purposes.

### **19. Seating Arrangements:**

- It is the responsibility of the leading invigilator to produce the seating plans after consultation with the Examinations Officer, taking into account previously established, as well as newly developing, candidate needs.
- For candidates / invigilators that require a wheel chair, sufficient space in line with JCQ regulations will be provided between desks so movement is not restricted.
- Candidates with known illness or disability will be seated near exit points in the examination room so possible disruption is minimised for others.
- Candidates who have disabilities affecting seating and posture, will be provided with appropriate comfortable seating and allowed rest breaks as advised by the SENCO.

### **20. Emergency Evacuation Procedures:**

20.1 At invigilation training, all invigilators will be reminded of the procedure in the event of an emergency during an examination or coursework / NEA; this is detailed on a separate document, a copy of which is in each examination room. Invigilators are also trained to deal with candidates who have a disability in the event of an evacuation.

### **21. Access Arrangements:**

21.1 Access Arrangements are applied for online by the SENCO, except for BCS applications, which are applied for by the Examinations Officer. The Access Arrangements folder resides in the SENCO's office and is passed on to the Examinations Officer for the duration of the examination season, ready for inspection by JCQ.

- Making special arrangements for candidates to take examinations is the responsibility of the SENCO in consultation with 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 after consultation with the SENCO.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Examinations Officer.

- Where a candidate has been granted the use of an Oral Language Modifier, a reader, or a scribe, those candidates will be introduced prior to the examination to the person acting in this role.
- For candidates who are completing on-screen tests, the hardware and software will be adapted to those candidates with sensory or multi-sensory impairment in consultation with the SENCO and network staff.
- For candidates who have been granted the use of a prompter, the person designated to this role will be made aware of prompting etiquette.
- Candidates who are granted supervised rest breaks, may on occasion take their rest outside the examination room if deemed necessary by the invigilator, with supervising staff who have been trained in maintenance of examination security. Only one member of staff per candidate will be allocated.
- BCS’s policy differs from JCQ and applications for Access Arrangements for ECDL on-screen assessments must be made in accordance with their “Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Guidance Document”, which details a large number of possible adjustments available to learners with specific learning difficulties. It is worth noting that the background colour of the screen can be adjusted and learners must be made aware of this feature. Most adjustments must be applied for; notable exceptions include changes in the organisation of the examination room, separate accommodation for certain learners within the same centre, using an alternative venue, using coloured overlays and wearing tinted glasses. Access Arrangements for BCS ECDL are made by the Examinations Officer via the BCS Forum. Copies of the approval e-mails are to be passed on by the Examinations Officer to the SENCO.

## **22. Word processing arrangements**

22.1 Candidates may be allowed to use a word processor in accordance with JCQ regulations (p. 25 of the *Instructions for Conducting Examinations* and p. 54 of the *Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties* documents). The PC/laptop(s) used in examinations meet all the criteria set out in the aforementioned documents and is/are set-up by the Network Manager’s team for this sole purpose. A local printer is physically connected to the computer at the end of the session and the candidate’s work is printed in their presence by the invigilator. The candidate checks that all pages have been printed; the Word Processing form is completed and signed before the candidate is allowed to leave the examination room. The computer must be powered via the nearest mains socket by means of a suitable, PAT-tested charger; its battery must not be relied upon. The candidate must save the document (‘Save as...’) before the very start of the examination and she must be shown how to / reminded to save her work at regular and frequent intervals using the Ctrl+S keyboard shortcut. The candidate’s work is saved to at least one external USB device, which is stored in a secure location (in the examinations office) and kept until the EAR process is closed for that examination season.

## **Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration**

### **23. Candidates:**

- Candidates should wear school uniform and conform to JCQ/BCS examination regulations. The use of mobile phones and all electronic devices is forbidden. A detailed list of Examination Rules for Candidates is circulated to the candidates and their parents and is also available from the Examinations Office.
- 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/BCS guidelines.

- 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.
- If it is feasible, the Examinations Officer will ask Main Reception to attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an examination and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines. In the case of a BCS ECDL examination, the candidate will take the on-screen test at a later date.
- Candidates, both internal and external, are provided with the most up-to-date copy of the JCQ regulations ‘information for candidates’ and a second copy is also provided for parents / guardians. This document is explained to candidates by the Head Of Year in a year group assembly under the direction of the Examinations Officer, or by the Examinations Officer in the absence of the Head of Year.

#### **24. Clash Candidates:**

24.1 The Examinations Officer will be responsible for arranging supervision as necessary and identifying a secure venue.

#### **25. Special Consideration:**

- Should a candidate be ill before an examination, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the examination itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an examination, then it is the candidate’s responsibility to alert the Centre, the Examinations Officer, or the examination invigilator, to that effect.
- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three working days of the examination, for example 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 examination.

### **Coursework / NEAs and appeals against internal assessments**

#### **26. Coursework / NEAs:**

- Candidates who have to prepare coursework / NEAs should do so by the date published by the examination board.
- Heads of Department will ensure all coursework / NEAs is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Examinations Officer will keep a record of what has been sent, when and to whom.
- Marks for all internally-assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the Examinations Office by the Heads of Department.
- Refer to AHS Coursework / NEAs Policy.

#### **27. Appeals Against Internal Assessments:**

27.1 The Centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the Examinations Officer. 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 final mark or grade awarded.
- Candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework / NEA has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification.
- Appeals, following the AHS Coursework / NEA Internal Appeals Procedure, should be made in writing by 30 June to the Deputy Head (or other nominee), who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements.
- The Deputy Head’s findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Examinations Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.
- Appeals against internal assessments may incur a charge of £35.

## **28. Appeals Against BCS Assessments (ECDL):**

- BCS has its own Appeals Policy. Should the Centre want to appeal against any aspect of the examination or certification processes, against sanctions imposed as a result of malpractice, against decisions made by BCS regarding complaints made about the Centre or against the Centre audit, the Examinations Officer will meet with the Headmistress and decide whether an appeal is suitable. The appeal is to be made within 20 days of BCS's decision. The current charge for appeals is £100 + VAT. To escalate an appeal so that it is assessed by an independent reviewer, an additional payment of £400 + VAT will be required.
- If candidates wish to appeal against any aspect of their examination or certification, they must contact the Examinations Officer, who will guide them through the Centre Appeals process before BCS is contacted (as per their own guidelines). The current charge for appeals is £10 + VAT. To escalate an appeal so that it is assessed by an independent reviewer, an additional payment of £100 + VAT will be required. Learner appeals must be made within 20 days of the assessment.

## **29. Maladministration and malpractice**

- Whenever actual malpractice occurs – whether intentional or accidental - or is suspected, the invigilator is to inform the Examinations Officer, who is to contact the relevant examining body/provider (BCS) in writing and gather all the information, evidence and details of outcomes that may be required. In the case of a written examination, the candidate must be allowed to continue with the examination but the incident log must be filled in with sufficient detail. Should a member of staff be involved in or be responsible for the incident, the Deputy Head must be informed immediately. If the malpractice incident involves a pupil (cheating, communicating, etc.), the candidate may complete the examination but must be informed of the potential consequences of her actions before she leaves the examination room (i.e. disqualification). The integrity of regulated qualifications and the validity of results must be protected.
- In cases of maladministration relating to the conduct of examinations, the Examinations Officer is to inform the examining body (or BCS) immediately of the nature of the incident using the incident/interruption log forms provided and to ascertain whether any pupils were unfairly (dis)advantaged by the incident, in which case Special Considerations may have to be applied for. The examination may continue if the incident is identified before papers are collected.
- To avoid cases of maladministration relating to paperwork, coursework / NEAs, registrations, certifications, etc., the Examinations Officer must ensure that all JCQ and BCS procedures are adhered to. Invigilators are to be suitably trained and kept informed of new developments and changes to the aforementioned procedures.

## **Results, enquiries about results (EAR) & access to scripts (ATS)**

### **30. Results:**

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the Centre.
- Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by SLG.
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of SLG.

### **31. Enquiries About Results (EAR):**

- EARs may be requested by Centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking but candidate permission must be gained.

- If a result is queried, the Examinations Officer / Head of Department / Deputy Head will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the candidate's expense
- The school has the right to refuse an application for an EAR based on the evidence collected about a candidate. If a candidate does not agree with this decision, then they have the right to appeal. See 'Examinations Policy – Internal Appeals'
- When the board does not uphold an EAR, (1) the Centre or (2) the candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out – this will be at either (1) the Centre's or (2) the candidate's expense.

### **32. Access To Scripts (ATS):**

- After the release of results, candidates may ask Heads of Department to request the return of papers which should be within three days' scrutiny of the results. This will be at the candidate's expense. One examining body currently offers access to scripts (in pdf format) at no extra cost. Heads of Department must obtain permission in writing from candidates before the scripts are downloaded by the Examinations Officer.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. This will be at the department's expense.
- GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

### **33. Certificates**

- Certificates are presented in person at the GCSE Presentation Evening
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so and they sign the relevant documentation provided by the marketing department.
- The Centre retains certificates for 3 years. After this time, candidates must contact the awarding board directly.

### **Signed**

Issue Date: April 2019

Review Date: April 2020 or earlier if major change



Elizabeth Thomas  
**Headmistress**