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| | Exam Policy |
| Committee: | Teaching and Learning |
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The 11-19 exam policy

The 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 annually by the Head of Centre, Heads of Sixth Form, Heads of Department, Senior Leadership Team, Exams Officer and Governors.

Exam responsibilities

Having overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre, the Head of Centre:

- Advises on appeals and re-marks.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspicious or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document - Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

Exams Office Manager/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.
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- administers and provides staff training to administer access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration 2023-24
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Organises the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exam invigilators including senior invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.

- Submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Teachers are responsible for:

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

The SEN Coordinator SENCo is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- Provision of additional support - with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing/visual impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment - to help candidates achieve their course aims.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- 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.
- To avoid breaches of security, care must be taken to ensure the correct question paper packets are opened. An additional member of centre staff, who can be an invigilator, must check the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier of entry, if appropriate, immediately before a question paper packet is opened.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Checking of examination timetables and identifying any errors in subject/ unit or tier of entry and draw these errors to the attention of Examinations Office.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Qualifications

Qualifications offered

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

The qualifications offered are GCE, PRE-U qualifications, IPQ, STEP Maths, Edexcel Award, AEA, Extended Project Qualification GCSE and Entry level, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals and Level 1/2 Vocational Awards, University Admissions tests are also offered. All examinations are conducted under JCQ regulations or under other relevant legislation set by the awarding exam board.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year. If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by 01/09/2023

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Heads of subject, Heads of department and Senior Leadership Team.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Candidates/parents/carers, SENCo, Subject teachers, Head of key stage and Head of Subject.

Exam series and timetables

Exam seasons

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled on demand.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in November (GCSE Maths & English Language Resits only), January (BTEC unit assessments only), May and June. BTEC on-screen tests are available at any time during the academic year. University admissions tests, where offered, are held in late October through to early November.

Dependant on year group and year of completion, internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Head of centre, Head of sixth form, Heads of department, Senior Leadership Group and Exams Officer decide which exam series are used in the centre.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetable for Internal exams and External exams.

Entries, entry details and late entries

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of Department and Subject teachers.

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

The centre does not accept external candidates other than members of staff, ex sixth form students and Comberton adult education students only.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via Email, Briefing meeting and internal post/pigeon hole.

Late entries are authorised by Head of sixth form, Heads of subject, Heads of department, Exam Officer and Deputy Head.

Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with Candidates, Subject teachers, Head of post-16, Exams Officer, Heads of subjects and Heads of Faculty/Departments.

Exam fees

Exam fees

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

A Level entry exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Centre other than in circumstances where these could be avoided by earlier intervention.

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

Any Sixth form candidate wishing to re-sit a GCSE, unless this is in English Language or Mathematics where they have not previously achieved a Level 4, will be asked to pay the appropriate fee unless agreed by the Head of Centre where there are genuinely exceptional circumstances.

Any Sixth form candidate wishing to re-sit a GCE will be asked to pay the appropriate fee.

An administration fee may be charged to Sixth form students wishing to have a copy of an exam script. For 2023/24 fees will be released at a later date.

Disability Discrimination Act

Disability Discrimination Act

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

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

A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

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

Access arrangements

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

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

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of both the SENCo and Exams officer. The deadline for applications for the summer exams 2024 is 21st March 2024.

The deadline for any modified papers for summer exams 2024 is the 31st January 2024.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCo with the exams officer. Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCo with the exams officer. Candidates with extra time and/or a reader (reading pen) will be roomed with other non-extra time students whilst those requiring scribes will be roomed separately as per JCQ regulations.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the exams officer.

Managing invigilators

Managing invigilators

Support staff and External staff are used to invigilate examinations. These invigilators will be used for Internal exams and External exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams office.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Centre administration.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams office.

Invigilators rates of pay are set by the centre administration.

Malpractice

The Exams office is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam days

The exams officer will book all exam rooms 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 lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with the relevant exam board regulations or JCQ guidelines and all members of staff should adhere to any instruction given by the lead invigilator, whose responsibility is to ensure that the relevant exam board regulations are being implemented.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted.

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

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to heads of department at the end of the exam session.

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

Candidates

Candidates

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

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with the relevant exam board/administrative guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the exams officer or senior invigilator.

Note: candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

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

Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision.

Students will be notified in advance of the exam season of any potential exam clash. Students will be expected to follow all JCQ regulations on the matter.

Clash students will be required to sign a confirmation slip indicating they have fully read and understood the requirements. These will be made available to students on receipt of individual exam timetables.

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, the exams officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.

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

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

Internal assessments and appeals

Internal assessment replaces the largely discontinued term coursework

It is the duty of heads of department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Appeals against internal assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy, available from the exams office.

Results

Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

Individual result slips will be available to candidates for collection on results days at the centre. Candidates requiring their summer exam results to be sent by e-mail should notify the exams office before the end of the summer term. Third parties can collect results only with written permission of the candidate and on production of photographic identification.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Head of centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Exams officer.

EARs (Enquiries about Results)

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

If a result is queried, the exams officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

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

ATS (Access to Scripts)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

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

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

Certificates

Certificates

Certificates are presented in person 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 retains certificates for **one year** after which they will be destroyed in a confidential manner. A record of destroyed certificates will be kept for four years in line with JCQ regulations. Candidates are advised that copies of certificates or Certifying Statements of Results are available from the exam boards at their own cost.

Appendix 1

BTEC Internal Verification Procedures

- The internal verifier will sample the work of the unit assigned to them, at the completion of the unit. The I.V will not necessarily be a subject specialist.
- Students' work will be selected at random but will include a cross-section of achievement levels such as highest, lowest and one from the middle. A grid method will be used to ensure every unit, every pupil and every assessor is verified
- The sample size will not be less than 30% of the student group as this minimum will be necessary to provide sufficient numbers in our likely group sizes. The Director of Vocational Studies will be involved in sampling all subjects in the first year.
- Feedback will be given to the assessors within 48 hours or earlier if possible using the I.V. feedback sheet. It is envisaged that in ideal circumstances, the process will occur in the presence of the assessor as they will be able to provide essential feedback and background.
- Student records will be signed to indicate that the process has occurred.
- For final internal verification, it is envisaged that 50% of the student group will be sampled and the process undertaken above. Through the on-going process, all students are likely to have had some work internally verified.
- It will be our intention to certify the marking of every assessor.
- By the end of the course every unit will have been sampled and every student will have had some units verified.
- Separate BTEC guidance on Appeal and Procedures are available upon request. Please email: com-exams@combertonvc.org

Appendix 2

Malpractice Procedures for internally assessed components should be read in conjunction with the Exams Malpractice Policy

Candidates may not:

- submit work which is not their own;
- lend work to other candidates;
- allow other candidates access to, or the use of, their source material, unless it is part of an authorised joint project;
- include work copied directly from books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution;
- Submit work typed or word-processed by a third person without acknowledgement.

Irregularities in internally assessed components of examinations discovered prior to the signing of declarations of authentication need not be reported to the Exam Board. The centre may instead decline to accept the work for assessment purposes.

If an irregularity is discovered by the centre after the signing of declarations of authentication, full details of the case must be submitted to the Exam Board at the earliest opportunity. The matter will then be treated as a formal case of suspected malpractice.

Irregularities discovered by the Exam Board will be reported to the centre.

Under the terms of JCQ Regulations, candidates who breach the Regulations may be disqualified from subjects for which they have been entered in the current examination series.

Comberton Village College is committed to adhering to the rules and regulations as set out by JCQ and the Exam Boards.

All matters of suspected malpractice will therefore be thoroughly investigated by the College and the Exam Board will be notified.

Appendix 3

Outlining staff responsibilities – GCSE coursework (if applicable)

Senior leadership team

- Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of coursework. Ensuring assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.
- At the start of the academic year, begin coordinating with heads of department/subject to schedule coursework. (It is advisable that coursework be spread throughout the academic years of key stage 4).
- Map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve:
 - clashes/ problems over the timing or operation of coursework.
 - issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.)
- Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events.
- Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for coursework.

Heads of department/faculty

- Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.
- Standardize internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regards to coursework.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.
- Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualize sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.

Teaching staff

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*.
- Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting coursework, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.
- Supply to the exams office details of all unit codes for coursework.
- Obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times.

- Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.
- Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.
- Retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one).
- Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the center.
- Ask the appropriate special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

Exams office staff

- Enter students for individual units, whether assessed by coursework, external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries.
- Enter students' 'cash-in' codes for the terminal exam series.
- Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD or hard copy format.
- Download and distribute mark sheets for teaching staff to use, and collect and send mark sheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- On the few occasions where coursework cannot be conducted in the classroom, arrange suitable accommodation where coursework can be carried out, at the direction of the senior leadership team.

Special educational needs coordinator/additional learning support

- Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.
- Work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.
- Outlining staff responsibilities - coursework.

Senior leadership team, consortium management and lead assessor

- Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of coursework, and ensure that it complies with both the JCQ general guidelines and awarding body instructions.

- Ensure procedures are in place to cover requirements for summative assessment – and that these are communicated to all relevant consortium staff.
- Map overall requirements for the year. Resolve any clashes/problems arising over the timing or operation of controlled assessments. Also any issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.)
- Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events.
- Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for coursework.

Appendix 4

Reviews of marking - centre assessed marks (GCSE controlled assessments, GCE coursework, GCE and GCSE non-examination assessments and Project qualifications)

Comberton Village College is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff mark candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. Comberton Village College is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

1. Comberton Village College will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks and appropriate feedback so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.
2. Comberton Village College will inform candidates that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.
3. Comberton Village College will, having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate.
4. Comberton Village College will provide candidates with sufficient time in order to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision.
5. Candidates will be required to submit a request for a review of the centre's marking within 2 weeks of the issue date. Requests will not be accepted after this deadline. Requests **must** be made in writing and submitted to the Exam team. Any request will be subject to a set fee which for the academic year 2023-24 is £40.
6. Comberton Village College will allow sufficient time for the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline.
7. Comberton Village College will ensure that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review.
8. Comberton Village College will instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.

9. Comberton Village College will inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.
10. The outcome of the review of the centre's marking will be made known to the head of centre. A written record of the review will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request.

The moderation process carried out by the awarding bodies may result in a mark change, either upwards or downwards, even after an internal review. The internal review process is in place to ensure consistency of marking within the centre, whereas moderation by the awarding body ensures that centre marking is in line with national standards. The mark submitted to the awarding body is subject to change and should therefore be considered provisional.