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| TITLE: Exams Policy | REF: GOV065 | VERSION: 2 |
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| 1 | | New Policy |
| 2. 16.01.24 | Director of Education | Full revised |

Exams Policy

Our vision at Activate Learning Education Trust is “transform lives through learning’ by igniting confidence, expanding opportunities, energising the community, and generating prosperity. Through [our Learning Philosophy](#) and core values of empowerment, enterprise, connectedness, and transformation, we will provide our students and staff with a safe and supportive environment in which to thrive

Our [Learning Philosophy](#) is rooted in the dynamics between the brain, motivation, and our emotions.

Policy Statement

This policy sets out expectations regarding Exams.

Principles

- We believe that every learner is important and may have needs that require teaching and learning environment and resources reasonable adaptation.
- The most impact in learning happens when learners know why, how etc therefore we seek to provide learning through practical experience etc.
- As an organisation we seek opportunities to embed learning and make knowledge and skills relevant to the learning.

This policy is linked to:

GOV028 Non-Examination Assessment Policy

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1. Introduction and aims

Our schools and UTCs are committed to ensuring that exams are managed and administered effectively.

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- The planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates
- Our system of exams administration is efficient and clear, and staff and pupils understand what is required and expected of them
- We comply with requirements and guidance set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding bodies

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Everyone

Everyone involved in our exam processes, including staff and pupils, must read, understand and implement this policy.

2.2 Head of centre

The head of centre:

- Has overall responsibility for the school or UTC as an exams centre
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on [suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments](#)
- Ensuring that non-examination assessments comply with JCQ guidance and awarding body subject-specific instructions

Our head of centre the Executive Principal for the school or UTC

2.3 Exams officer

The exams officer is responsible for the administration of exams. They:

- Manage the administration of examinations and non examination assessments
- Advise the senior leadership team (SLT), subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by awarding bodies
- Oversee the production and distribution of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved, and communicate regularly with staff about imminent deadlines and events. This calendar must be provided to all staff and candidates
- Ensure that candidates and their parents are informed of, and understand, aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them
- Check with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Receive, check and securely store all exam papers and completed scripts, and ensure that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- Administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ [guidance on the special consideration process](#)
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manage the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Ensure candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks are submitted correctly and on schedule, along with any other material required by the awarding bodies
- Track, dispatch and store returned coursework/controlled assessments
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates, and forward, in consultation with the SLT, any post-results service requests
- Report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, in line with the JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Advise on appeals and re-marks

2.4 Heads of Subject

Heads of Subject are responsible for:

- Advising the exams officer of any changes to syllabus or assessment details for their subjects
- Advising the exams officer of entries for their subjects
- Guidance and pastoral care for candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries
- Accurately completing entry and mark sheets, and adhering to deadlines as set by the exams officer
- Accurately completing coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Decisions on post-results procedures
- Familiarising themselves with JCQ instructions for conducting non-examination assessment
- Understanding and complying with specific instructions relating to non-examination assessment for the relevant awarding body
- Ensuring that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to non-examination assessment
- Ensuring that the regulations relating to Non Examination Assessment are followed, in particular the guidance around advice and feedback, use of resources, supervision and storage of work.
- Ensuring that teachers use the correct tasks for non examined assessments for the year of submission and take care to distinguish between tasks and requirements for legacy and new specifications, where relevant
- Obtaining confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s), where relevant, and ensuring that such materials are stored securely at all times
- Undertaking appropriate departmental standardisation of non-examination assessments

2.5 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supplying information about entries, coursework and non exam/ controlled assessments as required by the head of subject and/or the exams officer
- For Non Examination Assessments The use of resources, including the internet, is not tightly prescribed, but teachers will always check the subject-specific requirements issued by the awarding body
- Teachers will ensure that: There is sufficient supervision of every candidate to enable work to be authenticated and the work that an individual candidate submits for assessment is his/her own
- Ensuring that the regulations relating to Non Examination Assessment are followed, in particular the guidance around advice and feedback, use of resources, supervision and storage of work.

2.6 Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they can put exam day arrangements in place
- Processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)

- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms

2.7 Lead invigilator(s)

The lead invigilator(s) are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams officer to run exams efficiently, according to JCQ regulations
- Collecting exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam
- Collecting all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring they're returned to the exams office

2.8 Candidates

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirming and signing entries
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations, and signing a declaration that confirms the coursework to be their own
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations

3. Qualifications offered

The Executive Principal decides the qualifications we offer

The subjects offered for qualifications in any school year may be found on our websites

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of School, with the approval of the Executive Principal

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Head of School in consultation with the Executive Principal.

4. Exam series

Internal and External exams and assessments are scheduled in the year.

The centre does not offer assessments on an on-demand basis

5. Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and/or external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

6. Entries (including entry details and late entries)

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

We do not accept entries from private candidates.

We do not act. as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of subject by the exams officer.

Heads of subject will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline require authorisation, in writing, by the exams officer.

6.1 Re-sits

We allow re-sits a range of qualifications

Re-sit decisions will be made by the Head of School in consultation with heads of subject.

7. 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.

The exams officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance of each exams series.

Maintained schools and academies are not allowed to charge pupils to enter "prescribed public examinations" you have prepared them for in school, or for re-sits of these exams if you have prepared them for the re-sit at school.

This is set out in the DfE's guidance on charging for school activities. "Prescribed public examinations" includes GCSEs, AS-levels and A-levels. A full list is in the annex to an explanatory memorandum to the Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010.

We may charge for:

- Exams or re-sits the pupil has not been prepared for at school, even if they are on the list of prescribed public examinations
- Exams not on the set list of prescribed public examinations
- A pupil, if they fail, without good reason, to complete the requirements of a public exam where the school originally paid the entry fee
- Withdrawal from an exam (where charges would be applied by an exam board), if the parent requests withdrawal

Candidates may be charged for the following:

8. Equalities

All our staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

We will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that we provide to candidates in accordance with the requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of all staff.

9. Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

The SENCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of heads of subject and the SENCO

Room arrangements for candidates using access arrangements will be organised by the exams officer

Invigilation and support for candidates using access arrangements, as defined in the [JCQ access arrangements regulations](#), will be organised by the exams officer

10. Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and Exams Officer.

Contingency plans are in line with the [guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ](#) and awarding organisations.

| Scenario | When to implement | Actions | Person(s) responsible |
|--|---|--|-----------------------|
| Disruption of teaching time – centre is closed for an extended period | When the centre is closed and candidates are unable to attend for an extended period during normal teaching or supported study time, interrupting the provision of normal teaching and learning | Seek advice from awarding organisations and JCQ Communicate with parents, carers and students about the potential for disruption to teaching time and plans to address this Have a contingency plan to facilitate alternative methods of learning, alternative venues or both Prioritise candidates who will be facing examinations shortly Advise candidates, where appropriate, to sit examinations in the next available series | Head of Centre |
| Candidates unable to take examinations because of a crisis – centre remains open | In the event that candidates are unable to attend examination centres to take examinations as normal e.g. sickness bug | Communicate with relevant awarding organisations at the outset to make them aware of the issue. Also communicate with parents, carers and candidates regarding solutions to the issue Liaise with candidates to identify whether the examination can be sat at an alternative venue in agreement with relevant awarding organisations Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements | Head of Centre |
| Centre is unable to open as normal | In the event that the centre is | Inform relevant awarding organisations as soon as possible | Head of Centre |

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| during the examination period | unable to open as normal for scheduled examinations, e.g. a fire at the centre forces it to close | Refer to emergency plans and/or health and safety policy, where appropriate Open for examinations and examination candidates only, if possible Use alternative venues in agreement with relevant awarding organisations Apply to awarding organisations for special consideration for candidates where they have met the minimum requirements Offer candidates an opportunity to sit any examinations missed at the next available series, if possible | |
| Disruption in the distribution of examination papers | In the event that there is disruption to the distribution of examination papers to centres in advance of examinations | Communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers Arrange with exam boards for alternative means of receiving papers, e.g. electronically or alternative courier | Examination Officer |
| Disruption to the transportation of completed examination scripts | In the event that there is a delay in normal collection arrangements for completed examination scripts | Communicate with awarding organisations to organise alternative delivery of papers Arrange with exam boards for alternative means of receiving papers, e.g. electronically or alternative courier | Examination Officer |
| Assessment evidence is not available to be marked | In the event of large-scale damage to, or destruction of, completed examination scripts or assessment evidence before it can be marked, e.g. a fire at the centre destroys completed examination scripts | Communicate this immediately to the relevant awarding organisation(s), candidates and their parents or carers | Head of Centre |

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|--|--|--|----------------|
| Centre is unable to distribute results as normal | In the event that the centre is unable to access or manage the distribution of results to candidates | Contact awarding organisations about alternative options Make arrangements to access results at an alternative site Share facilities with other schools/colleges if possible | Head of Centre |
|--|--|--|----------------|

11. Estimated grades

Teachers are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested. These will be monitored by heads of subject.

12. Managing invigilators

External staff may be used to invigilate examinations.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams officer

If invigilators require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks the school is responsible for obtaining these.

DBS fees are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled, trained and briefed by the exams officer and head of centre.

13. Malpractice

The head of centre, in consultation with exams officer is responsible for ensuring that suspected malpractice is thoroughly investigated.

In relation to Non Examination Assessment:

The head of Centre and senior leaders will make sure teaching staff involved in supervising candidates are aware of the potential for malpractice.

Teachers will familiarise themselves with the [JCQ guidance on sharing assessment material and candidates' work](#).

Teachers will be vigilant in relation to candidate malpractice. Candidates must not:

- Submit work which is not their own
- Make their work available to other candidates through any medium, including social media
- Allow other candidates to have access to their own independently sourced material
- Assist other candidates to produce work
- Use books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution
- Submit work that has been word processed by a third party without acknowledgement
- Include inappropriate, offensive or obscene material

Failure to report allegations of malpractice or suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice in itself. Malpractice will be reported to senior leaders or directly to the awarding body.

14. Exam days

The exams officer will:

- Book all exam rooms (after liaising with other relevant users)
- Make question papers, exam stationary and materials available for the invigilator

Site management staff is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with [JCQ guidelines](#).

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with [JCQ guidelines](#).

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 subject in accordance with JCQ's recommendations.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed exam scripts to awarding bodies.

15. Candidates

The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the head of centre.

Our published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and we accept no liability for their loss or damage.

In an exam room, candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationary list, or the specification for that subject.

This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic devices with text or digital facilities.

Any precluded items must not be taken into the exam room.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time.

Candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

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

15.1 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible for making arrangements for clash candidates, including:

- Supervising escorts
- Identifying a secure venue
- Arranging overnight stays where necessary

16. Special consideration

If a candidate is unable to attend an exam because of illness, bereavement, or other trauma, or if a candidate becomes ill or otherwise disadvantaged during an exam, they are responsible for alerting exams officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 1 day of the exam.

The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 5 days of the exam.

17. Internal assessment

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

Marks for internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by heads of subject. The exams officer will inform staff of the deadline date for appeals against internal assessments.

Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with our internal appeals procedure.

18. Results and certificates

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days. The results slip will be in the form of a centre-produced document. Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the head of centre. The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of Heads of School. Dates of results days each year will be publicised for all candidates electronically.

18.1 Enquiries about results (EARs)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results.

A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate. A request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of a group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre.

All decisions about whether to make an application for an EAR will be made subject leaders.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and we will respond by following the process in our internal appeals procedure document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the exams officer following the JCQ guidance.

18.2 Access to scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 5 days of the receipt of results. Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

Applications for EARs cannot be submitted once an original script has been returned.

The exams officer is responsible for processing requests for ATS.

The cost of ATS will be paid by the centre.

19. Monitoring and review

The Policy committee and head of centre is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every 3 years.