



Birchwood High School Exams Policy (updated Spring 2017)

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The purpose of this exams policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates;
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exams 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 exams policy will be reviewed every year each Spring.

The exams policy will be reviewed by the Exams Officer

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Exam responsibilities

The Head of Centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

Exams Officer:

- manages the administration of internal exams and external exams
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- oversees the production and distribution, to all centre staff 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 exams timetable that will affect them.

- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- administers access arrangements and ensures applications for special consideration are made following the regulations in the JCQ publication A guide to the special consideration process.
- 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 exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.
- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.

Heads of Faculty are responsible for:

- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.

Teachers are responsible for:

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- processing of any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms.

Senior Invigilators are responsible for:

- assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- 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 ensuring their safe dispatch.

Candidates are responsible for:

- confirmation and signing of the Examination Information Handbook.
- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre/School Governors.

The types of qualifications offered are GCE, GCSE, IGCSE, BTEC, City and Guilds, IFS, ELC, Oxford, Cambridge Entrance Tests.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed as soon as possible.

Informing the exams officer of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of Faculty.

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

Exam series

Internal exams (mock) and assessments are scheduled each November (Year 11) January (Years 12 and 13) March (Year 10) Year 12 end of year assessments may take place each July.

External exams and assessments are scheduled each November, January and Summer 2016.

BTEC online exams and IFS online exams are held in agreement with the HOF/Teacher/Exam Officer.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions. Controlled Assessments, where high control is required will be held under the guidance of the Exams Officer.

The Head of Faculty and the Exams Officer decides which exam series are used in the centre.

The centre does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. When offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the Subject Teacher and the Exams Officer.

Exam timetables

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

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal without discussion and consent from the Head of Faculty, Head of Year or the Deputy Principal.

The centre does not accept entries from private candidates.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Faculty via email, internal post/pigeon hole.

Heads of Faculty 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 (i.e. late) require the authorisation, in writing, of Head of Faculty and the Exams Officer.

GCSE re-sits/retakes are allowed.

AS re-sits/retakes are allowed.

A level re-sits/retakes are not allowed unless with prior agreement.

Functional skills re-sits/retakes are allowed.

Re-sit decisions will be made by Subject Teacher and Head of Faculty in consultation with the Exams Officer.

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 for each exams series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

AS entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

A level entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Principal Learning entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Functional skills entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre.

Fee reimbursements may be sought from candidates:

- if they fail to sit an exam
- if they do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances

Re-sit fees are paid by the centre or the candidates as applicable.

Equality Legislation

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

The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Assistant Principal.

Access arrangements

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 SENCo.

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 Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Officer/Exams Assistant.

Contingency planning

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

Contingency plans are available via email, pigeon hole, the school intranet, the Exams Office and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Estimated grades

Head of Faculties are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

Managing invigilators

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the HR Manager.

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

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the HR Manager.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer/Exams Assistant.

Malpractice

The head of centre in consultation with Exams Officer 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 staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements as soon as possible in advance.

The Exams Office Staff/Invigilators will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may not 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 department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with the Senior Invigilator.

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 Year.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts 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 stationery list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

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

Note: 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.

Clash candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

Special consideration

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 2 days of the exam.

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

Internal assessment

It is the duty of Heads of Faculty 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 all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Head of Faculty. The exams officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against internal assessments must be made by. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days,

- in person at the centre
- by post (first class) to their home address if they are unable to collect their results
- collected and signed for with the appropriate authorisation

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 Exams Officer.

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The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Exams Officer/Vice Principal.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

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 the group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre / candidate as appropriate.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by Centre/Candidate/Head of Faculty.

If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the centre will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Officer following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers before the ATS Deadline.

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

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the centre / candidate as appropriate.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of Exams Officer.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates

- in person at the centre if invited to the presentation
- by post to their home address, posted (recorded delivery)
- collected and signed for if requested

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable identification with them that confirms who they are.

The centre retains certificates for five years if uncollected or undelivered.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if requested.

Mrs Lee Bothwell
Exams Officer
Updated Spring 2017

Appendix A

General roles	Access arrangements / special consideration roles	Invigilator / invigilation / malpractice roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of centre • Vice principal • Heads of faculty • Senior leadership team • Exams officer • SENCO • Subject teachers • Governors • Candidate • Parent/carers • Exams Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENCo • Educational psychologist • Specialist teacher • Exams officer • Exams Assistant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exams officer • Centre administration • Support staff • Senior leaders • External staff • Head of centre • Senior leadership team • Senior Invigilator • Invigilator • Cover Supervisor