



**Author:** LBL  
**Committee:** Curriculum  
**Approved by Governing Body:** November 2020  
**Committee Review Date:** November 2021  
**Legally Required Policy**  
**Review Frequency - Annual**

## Birchwood High School

### Exams Policy

#### Contents

Purpose of the policy	2
Roles and Responsibilities Overview	2
Qualifications offered	6
Timetabling and rooming	6
Entries, entry details and late entries	7
Exam fees	7
Access Arrangements	8
Contingency planning	8
Managing invigilators	8
Malpractice	9
Exam days	9
Candidates	9
Clash candidates	10
Special consideration	10
Non-examination assessment	10
Results	10
Enquiries about results	11
Access to scripts	11
Certificates	11
Appendix A – roles	12

## Purpose of the policy

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 Officer will review the exams policy annually each Autumn.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk).

## Roles and responsibilities overview

**The head of centre** is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is always compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements in order to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments.

**The examinations officer** is the person appointed by the head of centre to act on behalf of, and be the main point of contact for, the centre in matters relating to the general administration of awarding body examinations and assessments.

**The head of centre may not appoint themselves as the examinations officer.** A head of centre and an examinations officer are two distinct and separate roles. (GR 2)

### Head of Centre

Head of centre' is the most senior operational officer in the organisation. This may be the headteacher of a school, the Principal of a college, the Chief Executive Officer of an Academy Trust or the Managing Director of a company or training provider. It is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that all staff comply with the instructions in this policy.

For details about specific head of centre responsibilities, see sections 1, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 24, Appendix 1, section 6 and Appendix 8. (ICE Introduction)

- Understands the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ Publications
- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exams centre and advises on appeals and reviews of marking.
- Is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments.

### National Centre Number Register

- Takes responsibility for confirming, on an annual basis, that they are aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ's regulations by responding to the head of centre's declaration which is managed as part of the National Centre Number Register (NCNR) annual update
- Understands that this responsibility cannot be delegated to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the examinations officer, and acknowledges that failure to respond to the NCNR annual update, and/or the head of centre's declaration, will result in:
  - the centre status being suspended
  - the centre not being able to submit examination entries
  - the centre not receiving or being able to access question papers
- Has in place a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will provide support and guidance to the examinations officer and ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series

## Public liability

- Complies with local health and safety rules which are in place and that the centre is adequately covered for public liability claims

## Exams officer:

- Understands and is familiar with the annually updated JCQ publications
- Completes/submits the National Centre Number Register annual update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR <https://ocr.org.uk/administration/ncn-annual-update/>) by the end of October each year
- 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/carers are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them
- Checks with teaching staff that the necessary non-examination 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, stores securely, all exam papers, 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
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Organises the recruitment, training, and monitoring and timetabling of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- Works with the SENCo to ensure invigilators supervising access arrangement candidates and those acting as a facilitator supporting access arrangement candidates fully understand the respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room
- Supports the head of centre in ensuring that awarding bodies are informed of any Conflict of Interest declared by members of centre staff and in maintaining records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected before the published deadline for entries
- Ensures candidates' coursework/non-examination assessment marks are submitted along with any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework/non-examination assessments
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests
- Provides guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries, amendments to entries, timetable clashes, access arrangement or special consideration
- Briefs other relevant staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials.

## Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant staff to annually updated JCQ publications
- Ensure teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo
- Ensure teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Ensure teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events

## Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publication [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)
- Identifies and arranges testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifies the Exams Officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements. If not the qualified access arrangements assessor, works with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and ensures the correct procedures are followed
- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification
- Processes, with the Exams Officer, any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required)
- Works with the Exams Officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exams rooms

## Heads of Faculty

- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer
- Accurate completion of non-examination assessment / internal assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Keep updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Attend relevant awarding body training and update events

## Teachers

- Supplying information on entries, coursework and non-examination assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer
- Keep updated with awarding body subject and teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Attend relevant awarding body training and update events

## Senior invigilators/invigilators

- Attend/undertake training, update, briefing and review sessions as required
- Provide information as requested on their availability to invigilate
- Sign a confidentiality and security agreement and confirm whether they have any current maladministration/malpractice sanctions applied to them
- 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

**Reception staff/site team**

- Support the Exams Officer in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials and follow the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials

**Site team/IT team**

- Support the Exams Officer in relevant matters relating to exams rooms and resources

**Candidates/parents/carers**

- Reading the Examination Information Handbook
- Understanding non-examination assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own.
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

## **Qualifications offered**

The qualifications offered at Birchwood High School are agreed by the Principal/School Governors. The types of qualifications offered are GCE, GCSE, BTEC, OCR Nationals, LIBF, ELC, Oxbridge 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 (Year 13), July (Year 10), Year 12 end of year assessments will take place each June.

External exams and assessments are scheduled each November, January and Summer (May/June).

Online exams for BTEC, OCR Nationals, Oxbridge Entrance Tests and LIBF are held in agreement with the HOF/teacher/Exams Officer.

Internal exams, where appropriate, are held under external exam conditions. Non-examination assessments, where high control is required will be held under the guidance of the Exams Officer.

The head of faculty and the Exams Officer decide 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.

## **Timetabling and rooming**

### **Exams Officer**

- Produces a master centre exam timetable for each exam series
- Identifies and resolves candidate exam timetable clashes according to the regulations (only applying overnight supervision arrangements in rare and exceptional circumstances and as a last resort)
- Identifies exam rooms and specialist equipment requirements
- Allocates invigilators to exam rooms (or where supervising candidates due to an exam timetable clash) according to required ratios.
- Liaises with site staff to ensure exam rooms are set up according to JCQ and awarding body requirements
- Liaises with the SENCo regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates

## **SENCo**

- Liaises with the Exams Officer regarding rooming of access arrangement candidates.
- Liaises with other relevant centre staff to ensure appropriate arrangements, adjustments and adaptations are in place to facilitate access for disabled candidates to exams.

## **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.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Faculty via email, teams 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. (November and Summer series English and Maths only)

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

BTEC re-sits are allowed, however Level 3 students will be required to pay a fee for re-sit entries. Re-sit decisions will be made by the 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

The centre pays GCSE entry exam fees

The centre pays GCE entry exam fees

The centre pays Principal Learning entry exam fees

The candidate pays Principal Learning Level 3 re-sit fees

The centre pays late entry or amendment fees

Fee reimbursements may be sought from candidates:

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

The centre or the candidates as applicable pay re-sit fees.

## **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.

The SENCo determines a candidate's access arrangements requirement.

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 and the Exams Officer.

The Exams Officer will arrange rooming for access arrangement candidates.

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

## **Contingency planning**

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Principal/Exams Officer. The centre must ensure that there is in place, a written examination contingency plan which covers all aspects of examination administration. This will allow members of the Senior Leadership Team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence. The examination contingency plan must be available for inspection purposes.

The examination contingency plan must also reinforce procedures in the event of the centre being unavailable for examinations or on results day owing to an unforeseen emergency.

The Head of Centre will ensure a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for support and guidance of the Exams Officer and ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series,

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that the Centre has in place a written escalation process should the Head of Centre or the member of the Senior Leadership Team with oversight of exam administration be absent. This is available in the exam contingency plan and the Birchwood Critical Incident and Business Continuity Management Plan

## **Managing invigilators**

External staff will be used to invigilate external examinations

These invigilators may be used for internal 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

The Finance Director sets invigilators' rates of pay



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

## **Malpractice**

The head of centre in consultation with Exams Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration before, during or after examinations/assessments (by centre staff, candidates, invigilators) are investigated and reported to the awarding body immediately, by completing the appropriate documentation.

## **Exam days**

The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and ensure the question papers, other exam stationery and materials are available for the invigilator.

Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, the Exams Officer will inform the site team of the requirements as soon as possible in advance.

The Exams Officer/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 faculty 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. The head of year may give a formal briefing session for candidates.

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: an appropriate member of staff must accompany candidates who leave an exam room at all times.

The Exams Officer is responsible for managing 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 supervision in accordance with the JCQ guidelines.

### **Special consideration**

Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be 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 the examining board deadline.

### **Non-examination assessment**

It is the duty of Head of Faculty to ensure that all non-examination 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 non-examination assessed work are given to the exams office by the Head of Faculty. The Exams Officer will inform staff of the date when appeals against non-examination 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.

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

### **Enquiries about Results (EAR)**

EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a review of marking or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate, a request for a re-moderation of non-examination 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 return of scripts 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 requested by the centre. A transcript of results may be issued if requested by the Exams Officer if requested.

## Appendix A

General roles	Access arrangements / special consideration roles	Invigilator / invigilation / malpractice roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal/Head of Centre</li> <li>• Deputy Principal</li> <li>• Heads of Faculty</li> <li>• Senior Leadership Team</li> <li>• Exams Officer</li> <li>• SENCo</li> <li>• Subject teachers</li> <li>• Governors</li> <li>• Candidate</li> <li>• Parent/carers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SENCo</li> <li>• Educational psychologist</li> <li>• Specialist teacher</li> <li>• Exams Officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal</li> <li>• Exams Officer</li> <li>• Head of Faculty</li> <li>• Head of Year</li> <li>• Teaching staff</li> <li>• Senior Leadership Team</li> <li>• External staff</li> <li>• Senior Invigilator</li> <li>• Invigilator</li> </ul>