



**NORTHGATE**  
*High School*

# Examinations Policy

Respect | Determination | Teamwork

**Review period:** Annual

**Review by:** Mrs A Hope & Mr G Bolton

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**Next Review:** January 2027

# Examinations Policy

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in compliance with JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements
- To ensure all centre staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy. This exam policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and the Examinations Officer.

## 1. Exam responsibilities

### 1.1 The Headteacher – Head of Centre, assisted by the Assistant Head (Data and Reporting).

- The headteacher, as Head of Centre, is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments.
- The Head of Centre must ensure that senior leadership teams and exams office personnel familiarise themselves with the entire contents of the current *General Regulations for Approved Centres* booklet. In particular, heads of centre must familiarise themselves with paragraphs 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.
- The Head of Centre must ensure that relevant members of staff respond promptly to actions raised by the JCQ Centre Inspection Service. Failure to do so could result in the centre not receiving or being able to access question papers and other confidential assessment materials. Ultimately, awarding bodies could withdraw approval of the centre.
- The Head of Centre must ensure that relevant members of staff respond promptly to requests for information from awarding bodies relating to the administration and conducting of examinations/assessments.
- It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that all staff comply with the instructions in the *Instructions for conducting examinations* document. Failure to do so may constitute malpractice as defined in the JCQ document *Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures*.
- The Head of Centre must ensure:
  - compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements to deliver the qualification(s);
  - appropriate controls are in place which ensure accurate data is submitted to the awarding bodies by the required deadlines, e.g. entries, internally assessed marks;
  - all reasonable steps are taken to respond promptly to requests for information or documentation made by an awarding body or regulatory authority.
- The Head of Centre must ensure that the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught, including appropriate accommodation for candidates requiring access arrangements and/or practical assessments.
- The Head of Centre must retain a workforce of an appropriate size and competence, including sufficient managerial and other resource, to undertake the delivery of the qualification as required by an awarding body. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications.
- The Head of Centre must provide fully qualified teachers to mark non-examination assessments, and/or fully qualified assessors for the verification of centre-assessed components. They must ensure that teaching staff do not use artificial intelligence as the sole means of marking candidates' work.
- The Head of Centre must enable the relevant senior leader(s), the Examinations Officer and the SENDCO (or equivalent role) to receive appropriate training and support in order to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments within the centre, and ensure compliance with the published JCQ and awarding body regulations
- If using a third party to deliver any part of a qualification (including its assessments) at the centre, the Head of Centre must:
  - maintain oversight of, and responsibility for, the delivery of the qualification in accordance with JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements;
  - have in place a written agreement with the third party (unless exclusions apply) to ensure there is a shared understanding of the arrangement and will manage the risk of failure by the third party to deliver the expected service;
  - ensure that a copy of the written agreement is available for inspection if requested by the awarding body.

- The Head of Centre must ensure that the centre reports promptly any incidents to the relevant awarding body/ bodies which might compromise any aspect of assessment delivery, such as a cyber-attack.
- The Head of Centre must ensure members of centre staff do not forward emails and letters from awarding body or JCQ personnel, without prior consent, to third parties, or upload such correspondence onto social media sites and applications (including third party applications).
- The Head of Centre must ensure members of centre staff do not advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly nor provide them with the names, addresses and contact details (including email addresses) of examiners, moderators, external verifiers and any other awarding body examining/assessment personnel/JCQ personnel.

## **1.2 The Examinations Officer**

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. They:

- Manage the administration of external and internal examinations.
- Advise the Senior Leadership Team, subject leaders, class teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and entry procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Provide information for inclusion in the school's annual calendar relating to all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensure that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam procedures and timetable that will affect them.
- Consult with teaching staff to ensure that necessary NEAs, coursework and controlled assessments are completed in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provide and confirm details of estimated entries.
- Receive, check and store securely all exam papers and completed scripts, and make appropriate arrangements for their dispatch.
- Oversee applications for special consideration in line with JCQ's Guide to Special Consideration.
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes.
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Oversee the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Provide information for the school's Systems and Data Manager for uploading to the school MIS.
- Indicate where future procedural improvements might be made.
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forward to awarding organisations, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, any Enquiry about Results requests.
- Maintain systems and processes to support the entry of candidates for their exams.

## **1.3 Heads of department/subject leaders:**

- Provide guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Take part in post-results procedures.
- Arrange for the accurate completion of NEA/coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Ensure that appropriate standardisation procedures are in place where NEA/coursework forms part of the course.
- Arrange for the submission of candidates' NEAs, coursework or controlled assessment marks, track dispatch and store returned NEAs/coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arrange for the accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Examinations Officer and awarding organisations.
- Implement awarding body regulations for the completion of NEAs/coursework/assessments carried out under controlled conditions, in their subject.

## **1.4 Teachers:**

- Consult with the SENDCO about access arrangements as soon as possible after the start of the course.
- Submit candidate names to heads of department/subject leaders.

- Implement awarding body regulations for the completion of NEAs/coursework/assessments carried out under controlled conditions in their classroom.

#### **1.5 SENDCO:**

- Organise testing for and the administration of access arrangements.
- Where necessary, provide additional support to help candidates achieve their course aims (see section 6).

#### **1.6 Lead invigilator/invigilators:**

- Organise the collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Supervise examination candidates in accordance with procedures defined in the JCQ *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations*.
- Collect all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and return them to the exams office.

#### **1.7 Candidates:**

- Adhere to NEA/coursework/controlled assessment regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the work as their own.
- Conduct themselves in accordance with the *Information for Candidates* and *Warning to Candidates* documents issued by JCQ.

## **2. Qualifications offered**

**2.1** The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre, Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum), Head of Sixth Form, heads of subject/department and the Senior Leadership Team, and approved by the governor's curriculum committee.

**2.2** The qualifications currently offered are GCE, GCSE and a selection of appropriate general vocational qualifications.

**2.3** The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found on the Northgate website. If heads of department/subject leaders wish to change specification, the exams office must be informed as soon as possible, and by the end of the first week of the new academic year at the latest.

**2.4** Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by the Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum), in consultation with subject leaders, pastoral teams, parent/carers and students.

## **3. Exam seasons and timetables**

### **3.1 Exam seasons**

- Internal exams are scheduled in November, February/March and May/June.
- External exams are scheduled in January (Nationals and Technicals only), May/June and November (resit GCSE maths and English only).
- All internal exams are held under external exam conditions in order that the centre complies with the Ofqual and DfE qualification resilience arrangements.
- Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre and heads of department/subject leaders.

### **3.2 Timetables**

- The Examinations Officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams, once these are confirmed. Whole school timetables will be published on the school's website, together with links to each awarding organisation, JCQ warning and information sheets, and other relevant exam-related information.

## **4. Entries, entry details, late entries and retakes**

### **4.1 Exam entries**

- Candidate's exam entries are determined by the subject teachers. Whilst a candidate or parent/carer can request a change of tier or withdrawal of an entry, the final decision about this will be made by the centre.

### **4.2 Private candidates**

- The centre accepts external entries from former Northgate candidates only, who are permitted to resit an exam previously taken at the school, up to and including the summer following their leaving date. An administration fee will be payable in addition to the exam board entry fees.

### **4.3 Late entries**

- Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department and subject leaders via the Examinations Officer. Late entries are authorised by the Examinations Officer.

### **4.4 Retakes**

- Candidates are allowed to request resits, where available, at their own expense.
- Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates and subject teachers (see also Section 5: Exam fees).

## **5. Exam fees**

**5.1** All initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre.

**5.2** Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre when the request is made by the head of department/subject leaders. When requests are received from individual candidates, they will pay the fees, if the entry or amendment is agreed by the school.

**5.3** Candidates 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 organisation.

**5.4** Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to prepare properly for an exam, attend an exam, or meet the necessary NEA/coursework/controlled assessment requirements without sufficient reason.

**5.5** Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates (see also Section 4.4: Retakes).

**5.6** Candidates must pay the fee for any Enquiry about Results. Deadlines for this service will be provided on the Northgate website.

## **6. The Equality Act 2010, special needs and access arrangements**

**6.1** Please see the Northgate High School Special Educational Needs Policy - Appendix One.

**6.2** Should a candidate disagree with the centre's decision about access arrangements, this will be dealt with through the school's complaints procedure.

## **7. Managing invigilators and exam days**

### **7.1 Managing invigilators**

- External invigilators will be used for all exam supervision.
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer and the Principal Finance Officer. Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (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.

### **7.2 Exam days**

- The Examinations 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 desks in the exam hall. The Examinations Officer or lead invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Centre staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but subject staff must not enter the room unless invited by the Examinations Officer to clarify a query raised by a candidate.
- In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical issues.
- Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be available to the subject leader 24 hours after the exam, in line with JCQ regulations.

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

### **8.1 Candidates**

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

- Candidates should not be wearing outdoor clothing (hats, gloves, scarves and coats) as these make checking for concealed items and identifying candidates more problematic. Potential exceptions to this would be religious wear and any medical conditions.
- Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time.
- Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose, in which case a member of the invigilation staff must accompany them and there must be an immediate return to the exam room.
- The Attendance Officer should liaise with the pastoral team to follow up candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all.

## 8.2 Clash candidates

- The Examinations Officer will be responsible as necessary for identifying escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

## 8.3 Special consideration

- Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.
- Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.
- The Examinations Officer will make the appropriate special consideration request to the relevant awarding body.

# 9. Internal assessments

## 9.1 Internally assessed work

- Candidates who have to prepare centre-assessed work must do so by the centre-defined date.
- Heads of department/subject leaders will ensure that all NEA/coursework/controlled assessments and marks are ready for dispatch at the correct time.

## 9.2 Appeals against internal assessments

- The centre required to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available on the school website.

# 10. Results and access to scripts (ATS)

## 10.1 Results

- Candidates will receive their results via Bromcom or by individual results slips in person at the centre on results days. Results will not be issued to any other person without signed written permission of the candidate.
- Arrangements for the school 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 Head of Centre.

## 10.2 Access to scripts (ATS)

- After the release of results, candidates may request the return of scripts via the exams office; this will be at the expense of the candidate. Deadlines for this service will be provided on the school website.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. The written consent of candidates must be obtained.

# 11. Certificates

- Certificates are collected from the school and signed for.
- Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have written authorisation. Replacement certificates may be applied for by the candidate via the awarding organisation website and fees will be payable. The centre retains certificates for two years, after which they will be disposed of by secure means.

This policy has been drawn up within the framework laid down by our Equality and Diversity Policy and will be evaluated and monitored for its impact on students, staff, parents and carers from the different groups that make up our school.