



# Mark Hall Academy

Aspire, Endeavour, Achieve

## Examination Policy

It was approved by the Local Governing Body on	
This policy will be reviewed	May 2019
This policy will be reviewed by:	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Principal

## Contents:

1. Exam responsibilities
2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered
3. Exam seasons and timetables
4. Entries, entry details and late entries
5. Exam fees
6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), special needs and access arrangements
7. Managing invigilators and exam days
8. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration
9. Coursework and appeals against internal assessments
10. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)
11. Certificates
12. Internal Examinations
13. Malpractice

## 1. Exam responsibilities

### Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the academy as an exam centre:

- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the head of centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document 'Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments'.

### Exams Office Manager / Examinations Officer / Data Manager

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- Advises the Academy Leadership Team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Distributes in timely fashion to staff, governors and candidates dates 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 exam timetable that will affect them
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessments is/are 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 access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access Arrangements and Special Considerations regulations and guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations alongside the SENCO
- 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

- Prepares and presents reports to the ALT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made
- Submits candidates' coursework/Controlled Assessment 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 ALT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams

#### **First Vice Principal**

- Organisation of curriculum and teaching and learning
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4
- Oversight Assessment, Recording and Reporting

#### **Heads of department / Heads of Faculty/Progress Leaders**

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Examinations Officer
- Completion of internal moderation and standardisation
- Arrange for external moderation for Quality Assurance and robustness, where possible. Details should be forwarded to the Exams Officer by specified deadlines. All feedback reports should be copied to the Exams Officer who should disseminate to the Vice Principal
- Any actions/recommendations following moderation and standardisation should be tracked, monitored and evaluated for impact by the appropriate Middle Leader

#### **Teachers**

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Submission of candidates' names to Heads of department/Head of Faculty

#### **SENCO**

- Administration of access arrangements
- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements
- Provision of additional support - with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment - to help candidates achieve their course aims
- Ensure that any students eligible for exams in their home languages are identified (with the support of the EAL lead) and names provided to the Exams Officer by required deadlines.
- Check with the Exams Officers that any home languages being offered are on the up to date qualifications list

#### **Lead invigilator/invigilators**

- 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 ensure exams are conducted in the manner presented to them by the Exams Officer and in line with JCQ regulations

#### **Candidates**

- Confirmation and signing of entries
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own

## **2. The statutory tests and qualifications offered**

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the ALT and the Heads of Faculty.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered currently are GCSE and BTEC First Award.

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 syllabus from the previous year, the exams office must be informed by 1/11/2018.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject or all NCTs will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENCO, Heads of subject/Faculty and the Vice Principal.

### At Key Stage 4

All candidates will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

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

### **3.1 Exam seasons:**

- Internal exams are agreed in the Calendar.
- External exams are scheduled in accordance with the dates provided by the exam boards and through agreed moderator visits
- All internal exams are held under external exam conditions
- Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the ALT and the Heads of Faculty

### **3.2 Timetables**

- Once confirmed, the Examinations Officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal exams and external exams
- Copies of exam timetables are published on the academy website
- Copies of internal and external exam timetables are displayed in the exams board in academy

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

### **4.1 Entries**

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries and tiers by the Heads of Department/Faculty and the subject teachers.
- Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. Approval can only be given by the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Principal
- The centre does not accept entries from external candidates

### **4.2 Late entries**

- Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department/Heads of Faculty via email
- Late entries should be avoided where possible
- Late entries are authorised by the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Principal (Curriculum & Progress)

## **5. Exam fees**

- The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates.
- Late entry or amendment fees are paid by departments/parents/carers
- 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. Changes outside these times will be charged to the Department or the student

## **6. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements**

### **6.1 DDA**

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law

### **6.2 Special needs**

- A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO
- 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 the 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

### **6.3 Access arrangements**

- Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO and the Examinations Officer
- 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 SENCO with the Examinations Officer.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCO with the Examinations Officer
- All invigilators will be trained in line with JCQ regulations regarding how to support students with Access Arrangements

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

### **7.1 Managing invigilators**

- External invigilators will be used for external exams
- The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office
- 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 the allocated rooms
- The designated person will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Only staff listed on the Notice of Authorised Persons may enter the exam room.
- Subject staff may be present outside of the exam room to offer support and guidance before the exam starts
- In practical exams, subject teachers must 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. Spare papers will be distributed to Heads of Department once the scripts have left the building
- A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required

## **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' 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 may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them
- The Examinations Officer will, on behalf of, the Attendance Manager attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines

### **8.2 Clash candidates**

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

### **8.3 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 Examinations 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 a letter from the candidate's doctor
- The Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam

## **9. Non-Examinations Assessments and appeals against internal assessments**

### **9.1 Non-Examination Assessments**

- Candidates who have to prepare non-examination assessments should do so by the submission date given by the centre
- Heads of Faculty are required to ensure that MHA's NEA Policy is followed with all candidates
- Candidates will be required to sign a form to confirm that the work is their own
- Heads of Faculty are responsible for ensuring that candidates' have enough time to request a review of marking (appeal) before the mark is submitted to the exam board
- Heads of Faculty will ensure all non-examination assessment work is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Examinations Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom
- Marks for all internally assessed work are provided to the exams office by the Heads of Department and the Heads of Faculty by the date given by the First Vice Principal
- The Exams Officer is responsible for keeping a copy of all marks for internally assessed work and should collate, by department on a spreadsheet.

### **9.2 Appeals against internal assessments**

The centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the exams office within the NEA Policy

The main points are:

- inform each candidate with an entry for centre assessed work of the mark(s) awarded and advise them 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;
- having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate;

- provide candidates with sufficient time in order to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision;
- allow sufficient time for the review to be carried out, make any necessary changes to marks and inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline;
- 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 outcome of the review;
- instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre;
- inform the candidate promptly in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.

## **10. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)**

### **10.1 Results**

- Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days either in person at the centre, by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide sae) or by third party with written authorisation from the candidate in advance
- Arrangements for the academy to be open on results days are made by the ALT
- The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the ALT

### **10.2 EARs**

- EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking
- If a result is queried, the Examinations Officer, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense. The Examinations Officer is responsible for ensuring that the candidate's permission is gained and that they are made aware of the range of possible outcomes
- When the centre does not uphold 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
- Fees will be provided each exam season and distributed with individual results slips

### **10.3 ATS**

- After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request a copy of their scripts to support the review of marking. If the centre agrees that this would be beneficial then it will be at the centre's expense alternatively the candidate will be asked to provide payment for the fee for this service
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For both of the above, the consent of candidates must be obtained

## **11. Certificates**

- Certificates are presented in person
- Certificates may not be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party unless an Exam Certification Collection form is completed in advance by the candidate
- Replacement certificates are only issued by the awarding organisation and at cost to the student
- The centre retains certificates for one year

## **12 INTERNAL EXAMINATIONS**

### **12.1 Procedures**

#### Preparation

Examinations are an integral part of a Faculty's assessment programme. The examination period will give students the opportunity to practise organising an effective revision programme and experience a timetable of continuous testing. This is a learning situation for students and will help them to perform successfully in the end of key stage public examinations.

In order to prepare effectively for these examinations, departments will need to undertake careful planning of their written papers. The following points are offered as guidelines in the preparation of papers:

### **12.2 Syllabus**

- a) The teaching syllabus should be carefully analysed and questions set against the learning objectives prescribed for that period
- b) The examination paper should be seen as complementary to the coursework programme

### **12.3 Resources**

- a) Care should be taken in the preparation of resources. Print size and layout should be carefully considered. Resources that will not duplicate clearly should be avoided
- b) The language level of resources should be checked and materials modified as necessary
- c) Information should be provided in a broad range of forms e.g. written, graphs, photos, tables, diagrams, cartoons etc. to allow depth of investigation and testing
- d) If a large bank of resources is used, it may be appropriate to use a resources booklet which could be re-used in later test situations
- e) The skill level in the interpretation of the resource data should match the level being tested in the questions

### **12.4 Questions**

- a) Departments should consider the structure of the papers. The following points should be checked:
  - Would common or tiered papers be appropriate?
  - Should there be choice? If so, how much? Clear instructions must be given at the beginning of each paper. The time allocation should also be given
  - How will progression be achieved? How steep should the incline of difficulty be?
  - How are the individual questions linked to specific levels?
  - Language levels in the questions should be monitored carefully. The use of suitable command words and care with sentence construction could make questions more accessible to a broad range of candidates. Vocabulary should be appropriate and unnecessarily complicated words should be avoided. If in doubt the SEN department should be consulted
  - Print size should be considered. Small print may disadvantage some candidates – use at least 12 pt. type size. Hand-written instructions or resource materials should not be used
  - Balance, appropriate to the syllabus, should be sought between testing knowledge, understanding and skills

### **12.5 Marking**

- a) Clear marking criteria should be identified. A variety of styles may be used from point marking to levels of response for more open-ended questions
- b) It should always be possible to convert raw marks into a GCSE grade
- c) The Heads of Faculty are responsible for ensuring consistency of marking and reporting for their subjects
- d) Report as directed by the Vice Principal (Curriculum & Progress) and the Examinations Officer



### **13 Malpractice**

Irrespective of the underlying cause or the people involved, all allegations of malpractice in relation to examinations and assessments need to be investigated. This is to protect the integrity of the qualification and to be fair to the centre and all candidates.

Heads of Centre are obliged to report and investigate all alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice. All incidents are treated individually and responded to with either the response of no further action, a decision, further investigation by the centre, awarding organisation or by the malpractice committee.

The only exception to this is candidate malpractice in non-examination assessments before the authentication forms have been signed by the candidate. In this instance the malpractice will be dealt with in accordance with the centre's procedures.

If a person wishes to report malpractice independently of the centre they may do so anonymously by contacting the awarding organisation directly.

Individuals that are accused of malpractice have their own rights which can be found in section 6.14 of the JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments 2017-18. These will be communicated to the individual in a case of alleged, suspected or actual malpractice.

Sanctions and/or penalties that are applied by the awarding organisation are subject to appeal as detailed in the JCQ publication 'A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes'