



Totton College

Examinations Policy

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The Policy Purpose

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exam 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 exam policy will be reviewed annually.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Examinations Coordinator.

Exam Responsibilities

The exams office manager/exams officer:

- manages the administration of public and internal exams
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- oversees the production and distribution to 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 using ilearn, staff emails/memorandums and Staff Briefings
- ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them
- consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- receives, checks, logs and stores securely all exam papers, secure materials and completed scripts
- administers access arrangements via the relevant Online Access Arrangement service and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration 2016/17
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- advises customer services manager on 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
- submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule

- arranges for the dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SMT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Teachers are responsible for:

- notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course) The 'Normal Way of Working' Form; available from the examinations office and the study skills department, must be completed and returned to the study skills department.
- submission of candidates' names for entries and registrations, by the deadline stated by the examinations coordinator.

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

- the identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements
- Providing the examinations office with a completed JCQ8 Form in accordance with the guidelines set out in Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration 2016/17.
- the 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.

Invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam in the absence of the exams team.
- Completing an accurate seating plan/invigilation report for each exam.
- Completing the attendance register for each specification.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the exams office.
- Ensuring that the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2016/17, are adhered to throughout the examination.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Checking their examination timetable carefully for errors, and ensuring that they arrive at the correct examination room on the specified date at the specified time.
- Reading the handout JCQ Information for Candidates Taking Examinations provided with their examination timetable.
- understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Heads of Faculty in consultation with the SMT.

The qualifications offered are Functional skills, GCSE, Entry level and Vocational .

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Heads of Faculty.

Exam series

External exams and assessments are scheduled in November, December, January, February, March, April, May, June and July. Although, not all specifications are available in all of these months.

The Heads of Faculty decide which exam series are to be used in the centre.

It is policy for all On-demand Assessments to be scheduled in consultation with the exams team.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetable for External exams to all candidates either via their class teacher or by post

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject Teacher.

Candidates or parents/carers may only request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal in consultation with the subject teacher/ faculty manager and never directly to the examinations team.

The centre accepts entries from external candidates under certain circumstances.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department via the Staff Briefing, email and written communications.

Late entries must be authorised by Faculty Managers.

GCSE resits are allowed, although resit fees will be applicable.

Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with the course tutor, who should sign any resit form before submission to student reception.

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.

GCSE Exam Entry fees are paid by the Centre.

Vocational Exam Entry and Registration fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Departments.

Fee reimbursements and resit fees are not sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam/component where there are documented mitigating circumstances.

Re-sit fees and late entry fees are paid by the Candidates.

Disability Discrimination Act

All exam centre staff must ensure that meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), extended in 2005, and the Disability Equality Duty (DED), introduced in 2006.

The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

A person has a disability for the purposes of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Special needs

The centre will meet the disability provisions under the DDA (or the Equality Act 2010 once in force), by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Head of centre, SMT and Head of Study Skills.

Access Arrangements

The Study Skills Department will inform subject teachers of how candidates with special educational needs can be referred for support in the classroom and external examinations.

Once referred the Study Skills Team will assess the candidates' needs, and complete the JCQ Form 8 to communicate their individual requirements to the Exams Team.

Making the applications for access arrangements to the awarding bodies for candidates to take exams, is the responsibility of the Exams Team.

Ensuring that the relevant Access Arrangement is provided to candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Team in conjunction with the Study Skills Department and Foundation Studies Department (Normally when specialist support is required)

Overseas students

Managing overseas students is the responsibility of the Head of Faculty.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Examinations Coordinator. Some examples are detailed as follows:

Snow/Extreme Weather Conditions: When heavy snowfall or extreme weather conditions are forecast the examinations coordinator will arrange to stay within walking distance of the college when external examinations are timetabled. The help of a number of local invigilators and other members of staff will be enlisted when the scheduled staff are unable to get into the college.

Fire: Should the building be deemed unusable for reasons of fire, it is the responsibility of the Examinations Coordinator in consultation with the SMT and the relevant awarding bodies to attempt to relocate any scheduled external examinations to an alternative suitable venue wherever possible. Any change of venue will be communicated to candidates via text message as soon as possible.

Staff Absences: Where there are staff absences the following chain of alternative staff members will apply

- Examinations Coordinator
- Examinations Assistant
- Customer Services Manager

Private candidates

Totton College accepts private candidates at the discretion of the Examinations Coordinator

Estimated grades

Faculty Managers are responsible for ensuring subject staff submit estimated grades to the exams office or where applicable online; by the specified date, when requested by the exams coordinator.

Managing invigilators

Examination invigilators include External staff.

These invigilators will be used for External exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams office.

Securing the necessary Debarring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of HR Department.

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 HR Department.

Malpractice

The Senior leadership team is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice in consultation with the Examinations Team.

Exam days

The exams coordinator will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

The Estates Team is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, according to clear instructions provided by the Exams Team.

A member of the Exams Team will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted.

In practical exams subject teachers may 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. Papers will be distributed to heads of department at the end of the exam session.

A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required.

Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other 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 are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the exams team.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of invigilation staff at all times.

The Exams Coordinator is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.

Clash candidates

For clash candidates, the supervision of candidates, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Exams Coordinator.

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 exams coordinator, 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 by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Internal assessment replaces the largely discontinued term coursework

It is the duty of heads of department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The exams coordinator 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 and estimated grades should be provided to the exams office by the Heads of subject in a timely fashion.

Appeals against internal assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy, available from the exams office.

Results

Candidates will receive individual result letters on results days, either in person at the centre or; when not collected, posted by Royal Mail Second Class post at the end of the day.

EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidates consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the exams coordinator, teaching staff and head of centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at the centre's expense.

When the centre does not support a candidate or parent request for 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.

Access To Scripts

After the release of results, candidates may ask examinations staff to request the return of papers for which there are associated fees.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained and any fees incurred will be charged to the relevant faculty budget.

Certificates

Certificates are Posted (with a certificate of posting) or Collected by candidates in person.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so by the candidate and relevant identification is shown.

Certificates are withheld from candidates who owe fees.

Head of centre

Exams Coordinator

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Date 10th October 2016

The policy is next due for review in September 2017.