



Learning that Connects

Examination Policy 2016

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Please note that Simon Hanson is our Chair of Governors as from 29th November 2016

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The purpose of this examination policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of examinations is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient examination system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in Studio West's examination processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This examination policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and Examinations Officer.

1. Examination Responsibilities

Principal

Overall responsibility for Studio West as an examination centre.

Deputy Principal

- Oversight of all examinations.

Examinations Officer

Manages the administration of external examinations:

- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for JCQ general qualifications examinations.
- Communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Produces and distributes to staff and candidates the examination timetables in which candidates will be involved.
- Identifies and resolves examination timetable clashes.
- Receives, checks and securely stores all examination papers.
- Receives and despatches completed examination scripts and attendance registers.
- Administers access arrangement requests in accordance with current JCQ regulations.
- Administers special consideration applications in accordance with current JCQ regulations.
- Responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice in accordance with current JCQ regulations.
- Arranges the dissemination of examination results and certificates to candidates.
- Arranges, in consultation with Heads of Department, any re-mark/ appeal requests.
- Collects data on early estimated entries and forwards to awarding bodies.
- Collects data on estimated grades and forwards to awarding bodies.
- Registers candidates and collects results for BTEC/OCR National and other vocational courses.
- Makes registrations and arranges onscreen tests for Allis.
- Accounts for income and outgoings relating to the examination budget.

Director of Examinations

- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the examination timetable that will affect them.
- Line manages the invigilators by organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of examination invigilators.
- Collection of examination papers and other material from the Examinations Officer and starting of examinations.
- Ending of examinations and return of examination scripts to the Examinations Officer.
- Organising starters/finishers for examinations.

Curriculum Leaders

- Selection of appropriate courses.
- Centre approval for running courses.
- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about examination entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post-results procedures.
- Accurate completion of entry or registration marksheets in adherence to deadlines set by the Examinations Officer.
- Accurate completion of coursework or results marksheets and declaration sheets.
- Submits candidates' coursework marks and stores returned coursework according to the awarding bodies' regulations.

Learning Coaches

- Accurate completion of examination entry forms, course registration forms and all other marksheets in adherence to deadlines as set by the Head of Department and/or Examinations Officer.
- Accurate completion of coursework or results marksheets and declaration sheets.
- Notification of access arrangements, at the start of the course, to SENCO.

SENCO

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Providing Examinations Officer with correct paperwork in good time to make access arrangement requests.
- Provision of additional specialist support - eg scribes, readers, prompters, equipment.

Invigilators

- Invigilation of examinations to comply with current JCQ regulations.
- Collection of examination scripts at the end of the examination.

Candidates

- Checking of personal details and examination entries.
- Complying with examination timetable.
- Understanding and complying with examination regulations.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Administrative Staff

- Posting of examination papers.

2. The Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at Studio West are decided by the Senior Leadership Team.

The qualifications offered are GCSE, GCE, BTEC, AEA, ELC, OCR Cambridge Nationals, OCR Technicals, Principal Learning, Projects, FCSE, Functional Skills and City & Guilds VRQs.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in Studio West's published prospectus for that year. If there is to be a change of specification from the current year, the Examinations Officer should be informed by end of June in the current year as part of the estimated entries process.

Key Stage 4

The qualifications offered are GCSE (single, double, applied and short), BTEC, GCE, OCR Cambridge Nationals Level 2, ELC, Principal Learning, Projects, Functional Skills and City & Guilds VRQs.

Post-16

The qualifications offered are GCE, GCE Applied, AEA, BTEC, Principal Learning, Projects, OCR Technicals Level 3 City & Guilds VRQs and GCSE retakes in English and Maths. It is expected that AS modules will be completed during Year 12.

3. Examination Seasons and Timetables

3.1 Examination Seasons

External examinations are scheduled in June. Mock examination series are used in Studio West is decided by Senior Leadership Team.

3.2 Timetables

The Examinations Officer will circulate the examination timetables for external examinations once these are confirmed.

4. Entries, Late Entries, Retakes and Withdrawals

4.1 Entries

Candidates are selected for their examination entries by Learning Coaches and the Senior Leadership Team. Any candidate with a likelihood of obtaining a Pass or a G grade or higher will be offered the opportunity of sitting the exam.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal, but the final decision is made by the Senior Team.

Studio West does not accept entries from external candidates.

4.2 Late Entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Learning Coaches by the Examinations Officer.

Late entries should only be requested in exceptional circumstances. The awarding bodies impose considerable fees and monitor the late entries made by centres. Requests for late entries place additional pressure on the examination office and the awarding bodies.

Late entry requests will only be accepted up to the exam amendment deadline given by the Examinations Officer.

All late entry requests must be made on the form 'Exam Entry Amendment' and signed by the Principal.

4.3 Retakes

Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the Principal, Learning Coaches and the candidate(s).

4.4 Withdrawals

Withdrawal requests will only be accepted up to the exam amendment deadline given by the Examinations Officer.

All withdrawal requests must be made on the form 'Exam Entry Amendment' and signed by the Senior Leadership Team.

5. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Special Needs and Access Arrangements

5.1 Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act 2010 extends the application of the DDA to general qualifications. Studio West must ensure that access arrangements and special consideration regulations are consistent with the law. Reasonable adjustments should be considered where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage when undertaking an assessment. A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements. How reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.

5.2 Special Needs

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

The SENCO will inform teaching staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates may be granted during the course and in the examination.

5.3 Access Arrangements

Identifying special arrangements for candidates to take examinations is the responsibility of Learning Coaches and SENCO. A candidate will only be permitted the use of an examination access arrangement if that is their normal way of working in class, in accordance with current JCQ regulations.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies, by their deadlines, is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

Accommodation for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO.

Specialist support for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCO. Invigilation will be arranged by the Examinations Officer.

5.4 Emergency Access Arrangements

The Senior Leadership Team will decide with the candidate and parent/carer what the most appropriate emergency access arrangement is. The parent must provide appropriate medical evidence.

Once the emergency access arrangement has been decided upon, the Examinations Officer will request permission from the awarding body. The SENCO will arrange emergency accommodation and additional staff (reader/scribe). The Examinations Officer will arrange invigilation using the cover list. The Examinations Officer will forward medical evidence and appropriate forms to the awarding body.

6. Estimated Grades

The Examinations Officer will provide Learning Coaches with estimated grade marksheets. The Learning Coaches will return completed estimated grades marksheets to the Examinations Officer by the requested deadline date. The Examinations Officer will submit the estimated grades to the awarding bodies.

7. Managing Invigilators and Examination Days

7.1 Managing Invigilators

External invigilators will be used for supervision of JCQ external examinations.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Director of Examinations.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of Studio West's HR department. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by Studio West.

Invigilators are timetabled by the Examinations Officer.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Senior Leadership Team.

7.2 Examination Days

The Examinations Officer will book the examination venues. The Examinations Officer will make the question papers, invigilator instructions, erratum notices, examination stationery and other materials available to the staff starting the examination.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated venues.

The examination starters will start and end all examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

In practical examinations subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

The content of examination papers must not be read by any personnel or removed from the examination room. All unused questions papers must be returned to the Examinations Officer with the completed scripts at the end of the examination. Unused question papers will be distributed to Learning Coaches after the Examinations Officer has accounted for all question and answer papers.

8. Candidates, Clash Candidates and Special Consideration

8.1 Candidates

Studio West's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour, use of mobile phones and all electronic devices apply at all times.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and Studio West accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates will be dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines and Studio West's own disciplinary procedures.

8.2 Clash Candidates

The Examinations Officer will be responsible for identifying clashes, arranging escorts, secure venues and overnight supervision.

8.3 Special Consideration

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an examination, suffer bereavement or other trauma, or be taken ill during the examination itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert Studio West staff to that effect.

Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within four days of the examination, 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 six days of the examination.

9. Coursework and Appeals against Internal Assessments

9.1 Coursework

The Examinations Officer will provide each candidate with a copy of the JCQ 'Notice to Candidates: Coursework and Portfolios' at the start of their examination course. These will be distributed through form tutors.

Candidates who have to prepare coursework portfolios should do so by the end of the centre-defined date given to them by their subject teacher.

Learning Coaches will ensure all coursework is correctly packaged for despatch in good time to arrive by the awarding bodies' deadlines. The Examinations Officer will keep a record of what has been sent to whom and when.

Marksheets for all internally assessed work are provided by the Examinations Officer to Learning Coaches for completion and return to awarding bodies and moderators.

9.2 Appeals against Internal Assessments

Studio West is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which is available from the Examinations Officer. The grounds for appeal relate only to the *procedures* used in internal assessment *but not to the actual marks* submitted by Studio West for moderation by the awarding bodies.

(See Appendix I 'Appeals against Procedures used in Internal Assessments'.)

10. Controlled Assessment

Senior Leadership Team/Director of Examinations

Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.

At the start of the academic year, begin coordinating with Learning Coaches to schedule controlled assessments. (It is advisable that controlled assessments be spread throughout the academic years of Key Stage 4).

Map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve:

- clashes/problems over the timing or operation of controlled assessments.
- issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.)

Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events.

Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for controlled assessments – see Appendix I.

Learning Coaches

Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE/A Level.

Standardise internally the marking of all Learning Coaches involved in assessing an internally assessed component.

Ensure that individual Learning Coaches understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.

Ensure that individual Learning Coaches understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant Learning Coaches notes, and any other subject specific instructions.

Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualise sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.

Learning Coaches

Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*.

Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, Learning Coaches notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.

Supply to the exams office details of all unit codes for controlled assessments.

Obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times.

Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.

Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.

Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams officer to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.

Retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one).

Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.

Ask the appropriate SENCO for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

Exams Officer

Enter students for individual units, whether assessed by controlled assessment, external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries.

Enter students' 'cash-in' codes for the terminal exam series.

Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams office, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in digital or hard copy format.

Distribute marksheets for Learning Coaches to use, and collect and send marksheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.

On the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out, at the direction of the Senior Leadership Team.

SENCO

Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.

Work with Learning Coaches to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

11. Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

11.1 Early Electronic Results

Awarding bodies may send electronic results to centres a day early for the purposes of the Examinations Officer and Data Analysis Officer. The JCQ impose a very strict security embargo on the release of examination results, usually 0600 hrs on results day.

These early results will be distributed by the Examinations Officer to the Principal, the Deputy Principal, and Data Analysis Officer only. In accordance with JCQ regulations early results must not be released to any other staff, including Learning Coaches.

Paper copies of the results must not be taken off-site until after the results security embargo on results day has elapsed. Early results must not be transmitted by e-mail until after the results security embargo on results day has elapsed.

Access to SIMS Exams Organiser will be restricted to the Principal, Deputy Principal, Data Analysis Officer and Examinations Officer until the results security embargo deadline has elapsed. This is the responsibility of the SIMS Manager.

11.2 Results

Candidates should collect their individual results slips on results days, in person, at Studio West.

Candidates who are unable to collect their own results slips on results day should see the Examinations Officer as soon as possible. The Examinations Officer will make alternative arrangements with the candidate for issuing results. (The Data Protection Act 1998 applies.)

Under no circumstances will results be given out by any members of staff over the telephone. (The Data Protection Act 1998 applies.)

Results slips will be posted to candidates if they provide an SAE.

Arrangements for Studio West to be open/set up on results days are made by the Examinations Officer.

11.3 Enquiries about Results (EARs)

EARs may be requested by Studio West staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

When Studio West does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may still apply to have an enquiry carried out.

The Examinations Officer will arrange applications for EARs. A candidate consent form must be signed by the candidate and returned to the Examinations Officer before EAR can be requested. Results can decrease as result of the enquiry.

If the department does not support the request individuals can make a request, but will be liable for costs.

11.4 Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may ask Learning Coaches to request a priority photocopy of their exam scripts within three days' of the results day (not available for GCSE). This service is for the purpose of deciding whether to lodge an EAR.

Studio West staff may request the return of original scripts for future teaching purposes. A candidate consent form must be signed by the candidate and returned to the Examinations Officer before original scripts can be requested.

ATS cannot be applied for once a script has been returned or the deadline has passed.

12. Certificates

Certificates should be collected from Studio West and signed for by the candidate. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they produce written authorisation from the candidate.

Studio West retains certificates for one year after which time they are returned to the awarding bodies, in line with regulations.

13. Severe Weather Arrangements

External examinations will still run even if Studio West is closed owing to severe weather (within the limit of Health and Safety regulations).

There will be a need for a member of Facilities Management to be on duty to open up the school, control heating etc.

Announcements will be made on Studio West's website and local radio and should be specific about which candidates should attend.

On the day, or the day before the examination, a list of staff that live within walking distance will be compiled by HR department, with their telephone numbers. Examinations Officer to ring external invigilators to assess their likelihood of attending. Staff on site to ring staff on list to ask them to attend as emergency invigilators.

In the event that Parcel Force cannot get to Studio West to pick up completed scripts, these will be held securely in the examinations store awaiting the next possible collection.

Appendix I

Appeals against Procedures used in Internal and Controlled Assessments

Studio West is committed to ensuring that:

- Internal and controlled assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant specifications for each subject.
- The consistency of internal and controlled assessment is assured through internal standardisation as set out by the awarding bodies.
- Staff responsible for internal standardisation and/or assessment attend any compulsory training.

The Written Appeal

- Candidates will be informed by the Examinations Officer of their right to appeal against *procedures* used in internal and controlled assessments for public examinations.
- Candidates will have access to this Procedure for Appeals document upon request to the Examinations Officer.
- The grounds for appeal relate only to the *procedures* used in internal and controlled assessment *but not to the actual marks* submitted by Studio West for moderation by the awarding bodies.

There is no requirement to make internally and controlled assessed coursework marks available to candidates before moderation.

The Procedure

1. The appeal must be in the form of a written request from the candidate to the Principal, setting out the grounds for the appeal. The appeal must be submitted at least two weeks before the final external component in the subject, or by Summer Half Term where the subject has no external components.
2. The Principal will appoint a panel consisting of a Learning Coach not involved in the original process, a School Governor as an independent member, the Principal or Deputy Principal (acting as 'Principal').
3. The panel will examine the evidence for the procedures used in the assessment and decide upon their appropriateness and that they have been properly followed, as required by the awarding body concerned.
4. The panel's findings will be formally reported back to the candidate in writing.
5. If the candidate is unsatisfied with the written response he/she may have a personal hearing.

Where a candidate is presenting his/her own case he/she should be allowed to be

accompanied by a (single) carer/friend. The Learning Coach(es) and the candidate should have the opportunity to hear each other's submission to the panel at the hearing. The candidate should be given reasonable notice of the hearing date; he/she should have sight of all relevant documents (e.g. the marks given, the assessments made) to the case in advance of the hearing.

6. The Examinations Officer will report mark changes as a result of the appeal to the awarding body. Records of the request for appeal and of the panel's evidence and deliberations will be kept by the Examinations Officer. An awarding body might wish to examine this evidence at a future date.

Information for Students

If at any stage during your exam course you have concerns about the *procedures* used in assessing your internally marked work for public exams (e.g. coursework/portfolios/projects/performance/controlled assessment), you should first speak with your Learning Coaches and/or your form tutor and discuss the matter fully with him/her. Usually this will resolve the situation.