
The Netherhall School & Oakes College

EXAMINATIONS POLICY

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The Policy Purpose

The centre is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently. This exam policy will ensure that:

- All aspects of the centre exam process is documented and other relevant exams-related policies, procedures and plans are signposted.
- The workforce is well informed and supported.
- All centre staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- All exams and assessments are conducted in accordance with JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions.
- Exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them.

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

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure ways of working in the centre are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ and awarding body regulations, instructions and guidance.

Important documents

The vast majority of examinations taken by Netherhall and Oakes students are covered by four awarding bodies – AQA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC. In addition to rules, regulations and guidance from the awarding bodies themselves, examinations are governed by regulations set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Important JCQ publications include

- *General Regulations for Approved Centres*
- *Instructions for Conducting Examinations*
- *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties: Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*
- *Instructions for conducting non-exam assessments*

Exam Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Ensures the National Centre Number Register Annual Update is responded to and approves the Head of Centre formal declaration.
- Ensures that the centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process.
- Ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the Examinations Officer (EO).
- Ensures security within the examination process is managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions.
- Ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place.

Examinations Officer

Manages the administration of public and internal exams:

- Advises the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Heads of Faculty, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) 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.
- Ensures that candidates and, where applicable, 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 are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Receives checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Administers access arrangements in conjunction with the SENCo and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publication Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Manages the invigilation team, including recruitment and training. Monitors the invigilation team to ensure all exams are conducted in accordance with JCQ publication Instructions for Conducting Examinations.
- Works with faculty leaders to submit candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores or distributes returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- Arranges the dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with SLT where applicable, any appeal/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Heads of Faculty

- Ensure teaching staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo.
- Ensure teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications.

The SEN Co-ordinator

- Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process.
- Ensures correct identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Provides additional support to help candidates achieve their course aims.

Teaching Staff

- Undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO and SENCo.
- Keep updated with awarding body teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications.
- Notify the SENCo of suggested access arrangement requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Give prompt submission of exam entries to Examinations Officer and to Heads of Faculty.

Senior Invigilator/Invigilators

- Distribute exam papers and other materials before the start of the exam.
- Supervise candidates in the exam room in accordance with JCQ publication Instructions for Conducting Examinations.
- Collect all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and return them to the exams office.
- Attend training, update, briefing and review sessions as required.

Reception Staff

- Support the EO in dealing with exam-related deliveries and dispatches with due regard to the security of confidential materials.

Site Staff

- Support the EO in relevant matters relating to exam rooms and resources.

Candidates

- Check their individual timetable.
- Ensure that they have the correct equipment for each exam.
- Understand coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own.
- Follow all procedures relating to Examination Conditions as defined by JCQ.

Where applicable in this policy, the term 'candidates' refers to candidates and/or their parents/carers.

Qualifications

The qualifications offered at The Netherhall School are decided by the Deputy Principal, Head of Sixth Form and Heads of Faculty. The qualifications and subjects offered may be found in the Centre's published prospectuses for a given year.

The Heads of Faculty must notify the exams office of any change of qualification and/or specification to be delivered in the following academic year by 30th June.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, Heads of Faculty, subject teachers, SENCO, School Achievement Leaders and/or Senior Leaders as most appropriate.

Exam Series and Timetable

Exam Seasons

- Internal exams and assessments are scheduled at various points within the academic year.
- External exams and assessments are scheduled in line with timetables provided by the relevant Exam Boards.

- On-demand tests are scheduled in agreement with the Examinations Officer.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the Examinations Officer will circulate the exam timetable for internal and external exams.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Examination entries are determined by subject teachers in conjunction with Heads of Faculty. Subsequent changes are made in conjunction with the candidate and, where appropriate, the candidate's parents/carers and the relevant Head of Key Stage.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Faculty at the start of the academic year. Any subsequent late entries are authorised by Heads of Faculty and may incur additional fees to be met by the relevant faculty.

Exam Retakes

If applicable, Key Stage 5 candidates who have not achieved a higher grade in GCSE Maths and GCSE English Language will retake those GCSEs in either November or the following summer exam series.

Additional retake opportunities will be discussed with faculty and subject leaders as well as with students themselves. Students will be advised regarding any changes with respect to Awarding Body regulations.

Exam Fees

The Centre will pay for all exam fees for candidates following a recognised course of study at the school upon the recommendation of the subject teacher.

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies. Late entry/ very late entry or amendment fees are paid by the relevant faculty for entries requested after the awarding bodies' deadlines.

Fee reimbursements may be sought from candidates who:

- Decide to sit an exam after the entry deadline.
- Fail to sit an exam or do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

External candidate fees are to be paid in advance of exam entry by the external candidates.

Disability Discrimination Act

The Centre will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible. This is the responsibility of the Deputy Principal and the Examinations Officer.

Access Arrangements

The SENCo or Examinations Officer will inform the relevant Heads of Faculty, Form Tutors and School Achievement Leaders of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the specialist teacher. More information can be found at the Centre Exam Access Arrangements Policy. The process for managing appeals against Centre access arrangements decision is detailed in a separate Internal Appeals Policy.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the SENCo and Examinations Officer. Rooming for exams, invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Examinations Officer in conjunction with the SENCo.

Overseas Students

Managing overseas students is the responsibility of the Head of Sixth Form.

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer in conjunction with the Deputy Principal.

External Candidates

The Centre accepts entries from external candidates who have recently left the Netherhall School or Sixth Form and require a retake of the exam taken at The Center. The Centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations. Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

Estimated Grades

Heads of Faculty are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Examinations Officer as and when requested by the Examinations Officer.

Managing Invigilators

Centre employed invigilators are used to invigilate internal and external examinations.

Recruitment, timetabling and briefing of invigilators is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Centre administration, the fees being paid by the Centre.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Academy.

Irregularities

The Senior Leadership Team should ensure support is provided for the EO and Invigilators when dealing with disruptive candidates in exam rooms and ensure that internal disciplinary procedures relating to candidate behaviour are instigated when appropriate.

The Exams Officer will provide an exam room incident log in all exam rooms for recording any incidents or irregularities and action any follow up reports to awarding bodies as soon as practically possible after the exam has taken place.

Invigilators will record any incident or irregularities on the exam room incident log.

Malpractice

The Examinations Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice and will do so following JCQ and Awarding Body rules and regulations.

Exam Days

The Deputy Principal will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and the Examinations Officer will make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the Invigilators.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

All exams will start 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. A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject-specific instructions and start the exam, if required. 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 be removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be available for collection by Heads of Faculty twenty four hours after completion of the exam.

Candidates

The Centre's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates will be made aware that the use of mobile phones and other non-approved devices will not be allowed in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Disruptive candidates will be dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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

The Examinations Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam days or subsequently.

Clash Candidates

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

Special Consideration

Should a candidate be ill before or during an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, or be otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed immediately before or during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the Centre, the Examinations Officer, or the 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 Examinations Officer will then forward a complete special consideration request form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Controlled Assessments/Coursework and Appeals

It is the duty of Heads of Faculty to ensure that all controlled assessment/coursework is ready for despatch/upload at the correct time.

Marks for all controlled assessment/coursework and estimated grades are provided to the Examinations Officer by the Heads of Faculty.

Student appeals against internal assessments must be made by 30 April in the year of assessment. This deadline may be extended in exceptional circumstances where the controlled assessment/coursework marking and moderation schedule extends beyond this time.

Appeals against Internal Assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate Internal Appeals Policy.

Results, Enquiries and Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

Candidates receive individual result slips on results days, in person at the Centre. The provision of staff to offer advice and guidance is the responsibility of Heads of Faculty and the Senior Leadership Team.

EARs

EARs may be requested by Centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for requesting a review of marking. The candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested.

ATS

Following the release of results, candidates may request the return of papers. Centre staff may also request scripts for teaching purposes. In both cases, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

Examination reviews cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

Deadline details and procedures for both EARs and ATS will be made available on results days.

Results and Certificates

Results and certificates cannot be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party unless they have been authorised in writing to do so. The Centre retains certificates for one year. The Centre retains candidate's learning records and the statement of results until the candidate turns 25 years old.