

Sedgemoor Exam Policy



Chilton Trinity

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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 each centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This exam policy will be reviewed annually by the Sedgemoor Examinations Officers group during the Summer term and will be agreed by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors within each partnership organisation.

1. Exam responsibilities

Head of centre

Overall responsibility for the school/college 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 / exams officer

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

- 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 exam boards
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors 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 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 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*
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- line manages the senior exam invigilator in organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- prepares and presents reports to the SLT 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 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 SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Deputy head/Lead Assessor

- Organisation of teaching and learning.
- External validation of courses followed at key stage 4 / post-16.

Heads of department/school/curriculum

- 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 exams officer.

Head of careers

- Guidance and careers information.

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to heads of department/school/curriculum.

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.

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.

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 are decided as below:

Principal Learning/Project/PLTS/Work Experience – Domain Assessor

Functional Skills – individual partnership organisation

Additional Specialist Learning – individual partnership organisation

(See Appendix A for specific qualification and personnel details)

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are listed within NDAC and the Additional and Specialist Learning catalogue.

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 the last half-term of the preceding academic year.

Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENCO, subject teachers, heads of subject/domain assessor and the deputy head of each partnership organisation as appropriate.

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 scheduled in accordance with each partnership organisation's schedule.

External exams are scheduled in January, March and May (or on-demand) as appropriate.

High level controlled assessments may require external invigilation.

The exam series used in the centre is decided by the heads of curriculum and the heads of subject within each partnership organisation.

3.2 Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer at the entering centre will circulate the exam timetables for internal exams and external exams.

4. Entries, entry details and late entries

4.1 Entries

See Appendix B for details of entry deadlines and roles and responsibilities.

4.2 Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to heads of department by individual partnership organisations in line with their own policies.

Late entries are authorised by the heads of curriculum, heads of subject and exams officer.

5. Exam fees

The home centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates. Any fees paid by a host centre relating to exams being sat at a host centre on behalf of the home centre will be invoiced to the home centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid in line with each partnership organisation's policies.

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.

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 and pastoral teacher.

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 that 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 special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO and the exams officer in the centre hosting the examination or assessment.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the home centre exams officer. All host centres will be informed of any access arrangements a candidate is entitled to.

Rooming for candidates with access arrangements will be arranged by the SENCO with the exams officer at the assessment centre.

Invigilation and support for candidates with access arrangements will be organised by the SENCO with the exams officer at the assessment centre.

7. Estimated grades

Estimated grades

The heads of department and the heads of subject will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when requested by the exams officer.

8. Managing invigilators and exam days

8.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for internal and external exams in line with Teachers Workforce Agreement and individual partnership organisation's policies.

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the individual partnership organisation.

Securing the necessary Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the individual partnership organisation.

CRB fees for securing such clearance are paid by the individual partnership organisation.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the exams office within each partnership organisation.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the individual partnership organisation.

8.2 Exam days

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

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

The lead invigilator 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 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 in line with the individual partnership organisation's policies.

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

9. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

9.1 Candidates

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

Candidate's 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.

For exams longer than one hour, candidates will not be allowed to leave the exam room until at least one hour after the published starting time. They will not be allowed to return.

Assessment centre staff are responsible for candidates who are late for their exams, or do not turn up at all.

9.2 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

9.3 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 exams officer or the invigilator to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate documentary evidence as soon as possible to the host centre, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The host centre exams officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body upon receipt of appropriate evidence.

10. Appeals against internal assessments

10.1 Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the end of the course.

Heads of department will ensure all coursework is ready for despatch at the correct time. The exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the exams office by the subject teachers and the heads of department.

10.2 Appeals against internal assessments

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

The main points are:

- appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the head of centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the head of centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the exams officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

11. Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

11.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the home centre. Where results are not collected in person they will be issued in line with each partnership organisation's policies.

Arrangements for the school/college 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 senior leader.

11.2 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 exams officer, 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 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.

11.3 ATS

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

12. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person or collected and signed for at the home centre.

Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have been authorised to do so.

Replacement certificates are only issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The centre retains certificates for a period in line with each partnership institutions policy.