



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

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EXAMINATIONS POLICY

To be read in conjunction with the following additional policy documents:

[Examinations Conflict of Interests Policy](#)

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Introduction

It is the responsibility of all staff within the Multi Academy Trust (known from now on as the 'Trust') who have any dealing with students being entered for exams, no matter how small that involvement, to read, understand, and implement this policy. It applies to teachers, support staff, TA's involved in supporting Access Arrangements and external invigilators. Where applicable these staff should also read the policies relating to on-going controlled assessment.

The purpose of this exams policy is:

- to ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interests of candidates.
- to ensure the operation of an efficient exams system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

Where references are made to JCQ regulations/guidelines, further details can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

Each exam centre is required to have their own set of localised procedures. The following list includes required documentation or links to wider Trust policies

<i>Examination Contingency Plan</i>	<i>Candidate Late Arrival localised procedure</i>
<i>Escalation Process</i>	<i>Food and Drink localised procedure</i>
<i>Internal Appeals Procedures (NEA)</i>	<i>Leaving the Examination Room localised procedure</i>
<i>Internal Appeals Procedures (Written)</i>	<i>Managing Behaviour localised procedure</i>
<i>NEA localised procedure</i>	<i>Overnight Supervision Arrangements localised procedure</i>
<i>Emergency Evacuation localised procedure</i>	<i>Separate Invigilation localised procedure</i>
<i>Localised procedure for the use of Word Processors</i>	<i>Access Arrangement localised procedure</i>
<i>Complaints and Appeals Procedure</i>	<i>Certificate Issue Procedure and Retention localised procedure</i>
<i>Procedure to verify candidates</i>	<i>Exams Archiving localised procedure</i>
<i>Access to Scripts localised procedure</i>	<i>Exams Archiving localised procedure</i>
<i>Procedure to check centre assessor's qualifications</i>	<i>Lockdown localised procedure</i>
<i>*Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy (Trust Policy)</i>	<i>Malpractice localised procedure</i>
<i>*Data Protection Policy (Trust Policy)</i>	<i>Special Consideration localised procedure</i>
<i>Equalities localised procedure</i>	
<i>Exams localised procedure</i>	
<i>Candidate Absence localised procedure</i>	

Centre Number Details

Beechen Cliff	50701
Bucklers Mead	63455
Critchill School	63414
Hayesfield Girls' School	50709
Norton Hill School	50749
Mendip Studio School	50754
Midsomer Norton Sixth Form	50749
Preston School	63463
Somervale School	50751
St Dunstan's School	63419
St Mark's School	50729
Writhlington School	50757

Exam responsibilities

The head of centre:

- has overall responsibility for the school/college as an exams centre and advises on appeals and re-marks.
- is responsible for reporting all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice - refer to the JCQ document *Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments*.

Exams officer:

- manages the administration of the internal and external exams at KS4 and KS5 for the main awarding bodies.
- advises the senior leadership team, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- oversees the production and distribution to all centre 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 their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exams timetable that will affect them.
- checks with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts and ensures that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ publications for Access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- line manages the senior exams invigilator in organising the recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- ensures candidates' coursework / controlled assessment marks are submitted, and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule.
- tracks, dispatches, and stores returned coursework / controlled assessments.
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post results service requests.

SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements
- Identification and testing of candidate's requirements for access arrangements
- To ensure that all teaching staff are aware of the needs of all students who are entitled to special access arrangements
- To work with the examinations officer to ensure appropriate support is given to those candidates in receipt of special access arrangements.
- To check qualifications of assessors

Heads of department or faculty

- guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries.
- accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- accurate completion of coursework / controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- decisions on post-results procedures.
- Be aware of the access arrangements for those students to whom it applies

Teachers

- supplying information on entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the head of department and/or exams officer.
- Ensure that those students who are entitled to access arrangements know about what they are and have had opportunities to practice the use of them,

Lead invigilator/invigilators

- assisting the exams officer in the efficient running of exams according to JCQ regulations.
- 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 ensuring their return to the exams office.
- The starting and running of exams
- Informing the SLT and exams officer of any malpractice.
- ensure that they have seen the ID of any student or adult entering an examination room
- ensuring that they have checked for all items described as being illegal for the running of an examination, eg mobile phones.
- ensuring that member of staff do not read the exam papers or take a copy of the paper out of the examination room

Candidates

- confirmation of entries and raising issues with the subject teachers in the first instance
- understanding coursework / controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.
- ensuring the conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications offered

- The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the *Head Teacher*
- The subjects offered in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus or similar documents for that year. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed.
- Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for curriculum.
- All students are entered for the exams that they are studying. Decisions about withdrawal are only taken by the two deputy Head teachers.

Exam timetables

- Exam timetables for internal exams are drawn up by the Exams officer in conjunction with a member of the SLT
- Exam timetables for public exams are published to the SLT in draft format in September, final exam timetables will be issued after the exam deadline date, usually middle of March.
- Students will be issued with draft timetables in mid to late February, final timetables issued in April, at which point an overview timetable will be published on the school website.

Holidays during exam seasons

- The school will not support any student applying to take a family holiday during published internal or external exams.
- The school will not issue individual exam timetables to students so that holidays can be booked before dates identified above. The school will only issue the planned or published start and finish dates.

Student Identification

- Any student attending any examination will be expected to present their ID as they enter the examination room.
- Failure to present their ID could lead to the student being refused entry or being admitted late as a member of staff has had to be found to verify the ID of the student
- All external candidates must present valid current photo ID upon entry to any exam room. For the purposes of identification the school will only accept a current photo driving license or a current passport. The school will not accept any other forms of photo ID.

Entries, entry details and late entries

- Candidates or parents/carers wishing to request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal must discuss their requirements with the Deputy Head.
- The centre will accept entries from private candidates for exam only applications, where there is no requirement for any coursework and provided the school is already running the qualification. Acceptance will be confirmed following receipt of exam and admin fees from the candidate.
- Heads of department/curriculum will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.
- Entries and amendments made after an awarding organisation's deadline (i.e. late) require the Head of Department to authorise. Where there is a cost associated with the change, this will be cross charged to the department.
- Where it is a prerequisite for entry into the sixth form the decision to resist an exam will be made by the Director of 6th Form. This will usually only apply to English or Mathematics at GCSE.

Exam fees

- All first time entries are paid for by the school
- Any changes to tiers that incur a cost, will be cross charged to departments
- Late entries submitted by departments that incur a charge from the awarding body will be cross charged to the department
- Students who resit GCSE as a pre-requisite to 6th form entry will have their first entry paid by the school. Subsequent resits of the same exam will be charged to the student, unless the HOD has agreed to fund the charge.
- If a student fails to attend an examination without a good valid reason, the school will invoice for the cost of the examinations missed.

Equality Legislation and Disability Policy

- All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.
- The centre will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ.
- Reference can be made to the School Equality Act Statement available on the website for policy on Disability.

Access arrangements

- The SENCO will make available to heads of department lists of those candidates with special educational needs and access arrangements that will be needed for any assessments/exams.
- A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENCO.
- Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENCO
- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer in conjunction with the SENCO
- Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Examinations Officer.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Examinations Officer with the support of the SEN support staff.

Candidates who arrive late

- A candidate who arrives after the start of the examination may be allowed to enter the examination room and to sit the examination. This is entirely at the discretion of the Examinations Officer and Head of Centre.
- A candidate who arrives after the start of the examination should be allowed the full time for the examination provided adequate supervision arrangements are in place. A candidate will be considered very late if they arrive more than one hour after the awarding body's published starting time for an examination which lasts one hour or more.
- For examinations that last less than one hour, a candidate will be considered very late if they arrive after the awarding body's published finishing time for the examination or 30 minutes after the awarding body's published starting time, whichever is later.

Where a candidate arrives very late for an examination the Examinations officer will:

- Send the script to the examiner/awarding body in the normal way;
- Send a full written report to the awarding body on Form JCQ/VLAREport on Candidate Admitted Very Late to Examination Room as soon as possible and in any event within 7days from the date of the relevant examination.
- Warn the candidate that the awarding body is unlikely to accept the work.

The report must contain the following information:

- The reason the candidate arrived late, including any details of special arrangements made for the candidate to reach the centre;
- the actual starting and finishing times of the examination;
- the time the candidate started the examination;
- the time the candidate finished the examination;
- a statement on whether security may have been broken due to the candidate arriving late, including information about the extent to which the candidate was under supervision from the actual starting time of the examination.

Contingency planning

Severe Weather / School closure

In the event the school is closed due to adverse weather or other emergency and provided it is safe to do so the school will be open for **public examinations only** with a skeleton staff to oversee the examinations. Provided it is safe to do so, pupils living locally should make every effort to attend their examination.

Information relating to public examinations in such circumstances will be on the website and a message left on the school's answering service.

- In the event of an emergency at the school, the Head Teacher along with SLT will make the decision as to whether or not exams will take place, if the exams are to be cancelled a notice will issued to students via the school website.
- If due to bad weather the invigilators are not able to get in to school then staff at the school can act as invigilators in order for the exams to continue. (The following ratios will be implemented - 1 invigilator to 30 students, where students require a reader the ratio is 1 reader to 4 students). If there are insufficient staff to meet these ratios then the exams will have to be cancelled, and a notice published on the school website.
- If due to bad weather the school remains open but candidates are unable to make it into school and it is not possible to relocate the venue of the examination, then an application for Special consideration will be made by the school's examinations officer.
- In the event of any disruption to any public examination, the awarding bodies will be informed as soon as it is practically possible.

Fire Alarm Activation and Emergency Activation Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm sounding:

- Invigilators will advise candidates to stop writing and take a note of the time the exam was stopped
- All papers and scripts to be left in the exam room with the Lead Invigilator bringing the attendance list only.
- Invigilators will await instructions from a member of SLT (this may be delivered by the Exams Officer)
- In the case of an evacuation, invigilators will escort students to the nearest fire exit and to the designated meeting point and keep the students under close supervision in silence and preventing communication between students.
- When instructed, candidates will return to the exam room under supervision and settled prior to the exam restarting

A note will be taken of when the exam restarted and a report for special consideration sent to the Exam Board. Students will be permitted the full working time set for the examination.

Malpractice and Maladministration

The Head of Centre in consultation with the link SLT is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice and maladministration.

Malpractice, maladministration or non-compliance, includes any act, default or practice which is a breach of the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements including, for example, that which:

- Compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate
- Damages the authority, reputation or credibility of any awarding body or centre or any officer, employee or agent of any awarding body or centre

Centres will follow the JCQ policy and guidance relating to any suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration.

https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Malpractice_20-21_v2-1.pdf

Candidates

- The exams officer will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by a member of the SLT in an assembly.
- At KS4 all students are expected to wear FULL school uniform. At KS5 students are expected to wear sensible clothes.
- All students will show their ID on entry to the exam room. External candidates will need to bring photographic proof of identity with them.
- Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.
- Candidates are not allowed to bring coats, hats or bags into any examination room.
- Candidates will hand in all electronic devices, including phones, MP3 players etc to the invigilator. Candidates will be issued with a numbered ticket which must be presented after the exam to the exams office to reclaim their devices.
- For KS4 Mock exams, Photography and Art, phones will not be handed back at break, but will be retained until the lunch period.
- In an exam room candidates must not have access to items other than those clearly allowed in the instructions on the question paper, the stationery list, or the specification for that subject.
- Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time.
- Note: candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.
- The Examinations Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day. This may be assisted by the Pastoral assistant heads.

Clash candidates

- The Examinations Officer will be responsible for organising arrangements as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays. Where necessary the SLT will be involved where candidates are close to the Maximum daily exam hours.

Special consideration

- Should a candidate be unable to attend an exam because of illness, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be ill or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre's Examinations Officer to that effect.
- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within seven days of the exam.
- The exams officer will make a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 2 days of receipt of the application.
- Centres will follow JCQ guidance relating to special consideration.

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/AA-regs-2020-2021-version-for-website.pdf>

Controlled Assessment/Non Examination Assessment

What is controlled assessment?

Controlled assessments are assessments that usually take place during a normal timetabled lesson in the student's normal classroom. For some subjects the students are allowed to prepare for the assessment by writing notes and draft versions, but these cannot, however, be brought into the controlled assessment. These assessments are usually conducted under examination conditions and the students will work in silence for the duration of the task, which can be over a series of lessons. In practical subjects the controlled assessment may be over a period of weeks and total 20 to 30 hours depending on the subject.

The results of these assessments count towards the final examination for the subject and so it is very important that the students take these assessments seriously and undertake preparation as they would for the final examinations.

Changes in the rules around controlled assessments mean that students cannot retake or improve their assessments. If they fail, they will need to sit another assessment that will have a different title.

Preparing for Controlled Assessment:

The requirements for each subject are different, but generally teachers will need to:

- Teach an overview of the chosen topic/task before students set to work
- Give students the context they need to understand the topic
- Teach students any skills they will need for their tasks, such as research skills
- Support and guide students throughout the research, drafting and write-up stages
- Remind the students that they can **only** write in **BLACK** ink. Drawings can be done in pencil.
- Outline to the students what can and cannot be brought into a controlled assessment. These do not differ from main exams, although students can bring their bags into rooms when undertaking controlled assessments, and phones **MUST** be turned off.
- Ensure that students are aware of the time for each assessment
- Ensure that any student who is entitled to special arrangements eg access to a word processor, reader, or extra time is aware of these arrangements and that the students know **HOW** to benefit from these arrangements as they have used them as part of their normal way of working. The SENCO will advise which students are entitled to access arrangements.

Responsibilities

The students are responsible for:

- Understanding the tasks that have been set
- Undertake all preparatory work in readiness for the assessment
- Arrive at the lesson with the required resources including black pen and other materials that may be specific to the subject

Appeals Procedure

This school is committed to ensuring that the assessment process is fair, consistent and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. However, to meet the requirements of the examination boards an appeals procedure is available.

1. The grounds for appeal relate only to the procedures used in arriving at internal assessment decisions or the production of externally assessed work and do not apply to the judgement themselves.
2. The appeal must be made in writing to the School's Examinations Officer within 2 weeks of the notification of the grade for the assessment. The grounds for the appeal must be clearly stated. The candidate can be supported in the presentation of their case by a parent/carer/friend.
3. The Headteacher will nominate a senior member of staff, normally the Examinations Officer (EO), or a member of the SLT, to lead the enquiry provided that they have played no part in the original assessment process.
4. The investigation will examine the evidence for the procedures used in the assessment, decide upon their appropriateness and that the procedures have been properly followed as required by the Awarding Body concerned. The enquiry will be completed within two weeks of receipt of the appeal. Should the investigation take longer, then the lead investigator will notify the parent in writing of the need to extend the time period for the investigation.
5. The panel's findings will be formally reported back to the candidate/parent/carer in writing.
6. Records of the request for the appeal, the evidence, deliberations of the panel and the result will be kept by the Examinations Officer and made available to the Awarding Body if required.

Final Results

Candidates can receive individual result slips on results days as follows:

- in person at the centre
- by post to their home address - candidates to provide stamped self-addressed envelope
- collected by a nominated representative - Results can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable photographic identification with them that confirms who they are.
- The school will **NOT** issue results over the phone to anyone, even the candidate themselves.
- The school will **NOT** issue results via email.

The results slip will be in the form of a centre produced document from the MIS system.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

- EARs may be requested by centre staff or the candidate following the release of results. A request for a re-mark or clerical check requires the written consent of the candidate and the candidate must complete the appropriate form.
- A request for a re-moderation of internally assessed work may be submitted without the consent of the group of candidates.
- The cost of EARs will be paid by the department unless the application is not supported by the Head of Department, in which case the candidate will pay the fees.
- All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Examinations Officer following the JCQ guidance.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

- After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within the published deadline.
- The cost of ATS will be paid by the department unless the application is not supported by the Head of Department, in which case the candidate will pay the fees.
- Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained, in which case the department pays the fees
- Re-marks cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

Appeals and complaints

- If the appeal is for a candidate under the age of 18, then the parent can start the process. If an appeal is lodged for a candidate 18 years or over, then the appeal must be made by the candidate and no correspondence can be entered into with the parent.

Appeals against Controlled assessment

- Should a candidate wish to appeal about the process of any internal assessment, they may make an appeal following the procedures outlined on the Policy on Controlled Assessment.

Complaint against the conduct of an examination

Should a candidate wish to complain about the conduct of an examination then the details must be lodged in writing to the examinations office within 1 week of the examination. Upon receipt the following procedure will be adopted:

- The examination officer will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 2 working days
- The Headteacher will nominate a senior member of staff, normally the Examinations Officer (EO), or a member of the SLT, to lead the enquiry provided that they have played no part in the original assessment process.
- The candidate (if under the age of 18) can be supported in the presentation of their case by a parent/carer/friend.
- The investigation will examine the evidence for the complaint and decide if the complaint is to be upheld.

- The enquiry will be completed within two weeks of receipt of the complaint. Should the investigation take longer, then the lead investigator will notify the parent in writing of the need to extend the time period for the investigation.
- The panel's findings will be formally reported back to the candidate/parent/carer in writing.
- Records of the complaint, the evidence, deliberations of the panel and the result will be kept by the Examinations Officer and made available to the Awarding Body if required.
- Where the panel upheld the complaint and feel that the performance of the candidate(s) have been affected then the examinations office will make a request for special consideration to the awarding bodies.

Learner Appeals Procedure (for Automated Testing and online testing)

- Learners who are unhappy with any aspect of the online testing process should first discuss the problem with the Exams Officer within 5 working days of receiving their result
- The Learner must make the reasons clear at this time in writing, which must be clearly dated and signed. It must then be handed to the Exams Office who will pass it to the relevant staff member.
- Online testing is undertaken using automated testing software which has been approved by the awarding bodies. In the event of a Learner raising a complaint an investigation will take place and a discussion may follow with the learner.
- If the Learner is unhappy with the decision of the Exams Office the Learner must write to the Headteacher within 5 working days who will fully review the complaint and attempt to find a solution
- The Test Centre will keep a written record of each stage of the process with dates and outcomes
- If the Learner is still unhappy then he/she has the right to appeal to the Awarding Body. This may be done via the Exams Officer or in the case of ECDL direct to this awarding body. The address will be supplied on request
- In the case of ECDL the BCS Representative will investigate the circumstances of the appeal and make a report to the appeals panel. In very exceptional cases, the appeals panel may request the Centre Manager possibly accompanied by the Learner, to attend a meeting of the panel to provide further explanation of the circumstances of the appeal
- Appeals panel decisions will be given in writing to the Exams Officer and the Learner and are final

Appeals against the final results after results day

Should a candidate wish to appeal about the final grades of any public examination they may make an appeal in writing to the schools examination officer. Candidates and their representatives cannot communicate directly to the awarding bodies. The following procedure will be adopted:

- The examination officer will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 2 working days
- The Examination Officer will communicate with the Head of Subject to ascertain if there are any grounds for the appeal.
- If the Head of Subject does not feel there are grounds for appeal, the examinations officer will communicate this decision in writing to the candidate and an appeal will not go ahead.
- If the Head of Subject does feel there are grounds for an appeal, the examination office will follow the published guidance from JCQ.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates

- in person at the centre
- by post to their home address - candidates to provide self-addressed envelope
- Collected by a nominated representative - Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have written authority from the candidate to do so, and bring suitable photographic identification with them that confirms who they are.
- The centre retains certificates for one year.

Conflict of Interest

- All schools in the MAT follow the guidance as outlined in the M AT Conflict of Interest policy.
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Is3BFU28baUeWRBvoex6Q550XCjgUmM3/view?usp=sharing>