

Examinations Policy

“The best life chances for all pupils”

St Benedict’s Catholic School

“LORD, save us! LORD, grant us success” Psalm 118:25

MISSION STATEMENT

“To work in partnership with parents, the Church and society in order to be a community in which young people are well educated and prepared to be effective Christians in the modern world.”

PHILOSOPHY

All students have a right to a curriculum which will help them to develop spiritually, intellectually, morally, socially and culturally and also prepare them for adult life. Examination success is key to ensuring that our students are able to live out their mission in the modern world of work and academia. The aim of the examinations team at St Benedict’s is to ensure that the correct systems are in place to ensure that the exams are held fairly, calmly and appropriately so as to ensure the best chances for the pupils in our care.

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.
- to ensure the Centre complies with Joint Council for Qualifications regulations and awarding body guidelines.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre’s exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy. This exam policy will be reviewed annually. This exam policy will be reviewed by the head of centre, senior leadership team and the exams officer.

CONTENTS

1. Staff responsibilities
2. Exam seasons and timetables
3. Exam Entries
4. Exam fees
5. Estimated grades
6. Managing invigilators and exam days
7. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration
8. Non-Examination Assessments
9. Results and Post Results Services
10. Certificates
11. Contingency Planning

Appendices

Appendix i: GCE and GCSE Non-Examination Assessment Policy – Staff Responsibilities and Risk assessment

Appendix ii: Appeals against Internal Assessment of Work

Appendix iii: Examination Contingency Plan

1. Staff responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the school 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*.
- Appoints a member of staff to provide analysis of exam results.

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 exam boards
- 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 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 and controlled assessment 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
- posting of exam papers.
- administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties and the JCQ Guide to the special consideration process*.
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for 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
- ensures candidates' coursework and controlled assessment marks and requested work samples are submitted on schedule, and record returned work and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly
- 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.

Assistant Headteacher

- Organisation of teaching and learning.

Subject Leader

- 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 and controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry, estimated grades and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.

SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements.
- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements.
- Advise Examinations Officer of access arrangements and requirements of candidates.
- 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

- Support the exams officer when preparing the examination rooms
- Assist with the collection of exam papers and all relevant equipment from the exams office prior to the examination.
- Supervise students and ensure JCQ 'Instructions for conducting examinations' are adhered to.
- Assist with the smooth and efficient running of the examinations.
- Collection of exam papers in the correct order at the end of the examination, and return to the exams office.

Candidates

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Ensure they know the date, time and location of all their exams.
- Understanding coursework and controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework or controlled assessment as their own.
- Ensure they abide by and are aware of the JCQ information for candidates for written and on-line examinations.
- Ensure they are aware of all deadlines for coursework/controlled assessments, entries and post results requests and that they meet stated deadlines.

2. Exam seasons and timetables

2.1 Exam seasons

Timetables for internal and external examinations are published on the school website, and parents are informed via the newsletter and by email. Internal exams are scheduled in November (for Year 11) and the summer term (for Year 10). External exams are scheduled in May and June, or at times decided by the examination boards. Internal exams in Years 11, 10 and Key Stage 3 are held under external exam conditions. Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre.

2.2 Timetables

The exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for both external and internal exams once these are confirmed via Edulink.

3. Entries

3.1 Entries

It is the subject leaders' responsibility to check that all entry codes and details are correct and to advise the Exams Officer of any amendments.

It is the students' responsibility to check that all entries and personal details are correct and to advise the Exams Officer of any amendments by the stated deadlines.

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by their subject leaders.

A candidate or parent/carer can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal, which must be agreed by the head of department. Any entries requested by the student or parent/carer and not supported by the subject teacher must be paid for by the student.

The centre accepts external entries from former pupils only. Any exceptions to this must be authorised by the Head of Centre.

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

Entry deadlines are circulated to subject leaders via email, notice-board outside the staff room and staff briefing meetings. Late entries have to be authorised by heads of department.

3.2 Retakes

GCSE retakes will be allowed in exceptional circumstances and to ensure compliance with attainment requirements. Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the candidates. The Centre will cover the cost of retakes for students in sixth form who have failed to attain a grade 4 in GCSE Maths and English.

4. Exam fees

GCSE initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre. A Level initial registration and entry exam fees are paid by the centre. 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. This information is passed to Heads of Department by the Exams Officer. Reimbursement will be sought from candidates who fail to sit an exam or meet the necessary coursework/controlled assessment requirements. This fee reimbursement policy will be communicated in writing to candidates and parents/carers at the start of GCSE and post-16 courses. Retake fees for first and any subsequent retakes are paid by the candidates, except GCSE Maths and English taken in Sixth Form.

Candidates must pay the fee for an enquiry about a result, should the centre not uphold the enquiry and the candidate insist on pursuing the enquiry. (See also section 11.2: Enquiries about results [EARs])

5. Estimated grades

The subject leader will submit estimated grades to the exams officer when, and if, requested by the exams officer, and exam boards.

6. Managing invigilators and exam days

6.1 Managing invigilators

External invigilators will be used for exam supervision of all external exams and some internal exams, as timetabled by the exams office. The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the exams office. Securing the necessary DBS clearance for new invigilators and setting up contracts is the responsibility of the School Manager. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre. Invigilators are timetabled, trained and briefed by the exams office.

6.2 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 invigilator. Site management is responsible for setting up the exam desk and chair requirements in allocated rooms. The lead invigilator will start exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines. JCQ guidance is followed with regard to the people who can be present in the examination room. Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room. Papers will be distributed to subject leaders by the exams officer 24 hours after the end time of the exam.

The exams officer is responsible for initial investigation of suspected malpractice. Substantiated evidence of malpractice is taken up by a member of SLT.

7. Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

7.1 Candidates

The centre's published rules on uniform, acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all 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 officer.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose, as agreed by the exams officer, and will be accompanied by a member of the exam office staff and returned immediately to the exam room.

The exams officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

7.2 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible for identifying clash candidates, arranging supervision with the centre or arranging overnight supervision as necessary according to the JCQ 'Instructions for conducting exams'.

7.3 Special consideration

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma or be taken ill during the exam itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the exams officer, centre, or the exam invigilator, to that effect on the day of the exam. Any special consideration claim must be supported by appropriate evidence within five days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor. The exams officer will then submit a special consideration application to the relevant awarding body by the deadline set by the examination board.

8. Non-Examination Assessment

8.1 Candidates who have to prepare portfolios should do so by the end of the course or centre-defined date.

Subject leaders will ensure all coursework/controlled assessment is ready for dispatch, with an authentication form completed declaring that all work submitted is the candidate's own work, at the correct time and the exams officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom. Subject leaders are responsible for submitting marks online.

The centre is obliged to publish a separate policy specifically for controlled assessments. **See Appendix i.**

The main points are:

- It is the responsibility of the subject leader to obtain the controlled assessment task details from the exam boards.
- Departments must plan when and how the assessment will take place, taking into account the accommodation and resources required.
- Relevant display materials must be removed or covered up.
- All staff must be aware of the relevant level of control permitted (high, medium or low) as this will determine the level of permitted supervision e.g. high control means that students are under exam conditions.
- All assessment materials must be locked in a suitable secure cabinet at the end of each session.
- Separate user accounts for exam use must be used for high control level work. These must have no access to internet or e-mail and must only be accessible during the controlled sessions. If work is saved on memory sticks these must be collected in after each session and locked away, as above.
- Where work is assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the exam board, standardisation of marking must take place in the school if more than one teacher is involved in the assessing.
- If suspected malpractice occurs, the exams officer must be informed.
- If a student's work is lost within the school, this must be reported to the exam board via the exams officer.
- Authentication forms must be signed by the teachers and candidates.
- Access arrangements do apply to controlled assessment.
- The assessment marks must be submitted to the exam office by the appropriate date.

8.2 Appeals against Internal Assessment of Work for External Qualifications – **see Appendix ii**

9. Results and Post Results Services

9.1 Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days in person at the centre.

Third parties may collect candidates' results only with prior written authorisation from the candidate to the Exams Officer.

Uncollected results will be posted to the candidate's address on the school information system or kept in school for distribution at the beginning of the next school year.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the head of centre. The provision of exam office staff on results days is the responsibility of the exams officer.

9.2 Post Results Services

Guidance on costs and procedures for the Post Results services must be published on the school website ahead of the exam season.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained. Review of marking cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

10. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person. Certificates may be collected on behalf of a candidate by a third party, provided they have written authorisation to do so. The centre retains uncollected certificates for one year after which time they will be confidentially destroyed.

11. Contingency Planning – see separate policy at Appendix iii



Staff Wellbeing Policy

Owned by: John D' Mello

Reviewed: October 2020

Date for Review: October 2023