



Examination Policy (External Accreditation)

Updated May 2024



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1. Introduction and Aims

Drumbeat School has multiple sites. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Exam contingency plan. This policy is applicable to those students who attend a subsidiary site as all will be entered for exams from the one central exam centre. Those students will always adhere to the policies, procedures and all exam regulations relating to that centre.

Drumbeat School is committed to ensuring that exams are managed and administered effectively.

The aim of this policy is to ensure:

- The planning and management of exams is conducted in the best interest of candidates and gives them the fairest possible opportunities to show attainment and achieve their full potential by the most appropriate and direct route
- Our system of exams administration is efficient and clear, and staff and pupils understand what is required and expected of them
- We comply with requirements and guidance set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and other applicable awarding bodies
- All staff including Senior Leadership Team, subject and class teachers, assessors, invigilators and other relevant support staff working within any exam related roles have access to Centre Handbooks and Guidance from the appropriate awarding bodies. A copy of these will be kept in the designated Exam Office

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Everyone

Everyone involved in our exam processes, including staff and students, must read, understand and implement this policy.

2.2 Head of Centre

The Head of Centre:

- Has overall responsibility for Bents Green School as an exams centre
- Is responsible for always ensuring the centre's compliance with awarding bodies procedures and principles
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, maladministration or plagiarism are reported immediately to the appropriate awarding body to allow them to decide how the matter will be investigated and also in line with the awarding body and JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments where appropriate
- Ensure the centre cooperates fully with any investigation in relation to suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, maladministration or plagiarism

Our Heads of Centre are Emily Thompson and Denise Gallagher

2.3 Exams Officer

The exams officer is responsible for the administration of exams. They:

- Manage the administration of internal and external exams

- Advise the senior leadership team (SLT), class teachers, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by awarding bodies
- Check with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ, AQA, ASDAN and other awarding body guidelines, policies and procedures
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for external exams
- Maintain systems and procedures to enable the reliability, validity and transparency of the process of internal assessment for all qualifications
- Maintain all qualification specification requirements
- For internally assessed qualifications, ensure assessors are aware of [Ofqual principles](#)
- Receive, check and securely store all exam papers and completed scripts, and ensure that scripts are dispatched as per the guidelines
- Administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration to applicable awarding bodies and follow the regulations of the awarding body and JCQ guidance on the special consideration process
- Ensure access arrangements, do not invalidate the assessment requirements of the qualification or give the learner an unfair advantage. Also that they reflect the learner's normal way of working and are based on the individual needs of the learner
- Awarding bodies procedures for requesting adjustments to assessments is always adhered to
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Line manage the exams invigilators and is responsible for their recruitment, training, and monitoring
- Ensure candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks are submitted correctly and on schedule, along with any other material required by the awarding bodies
- Track, dispatch and store returned coursework/controlled assessments
- Arrange for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates
- Report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, maladministration or plagiarism immediately to the appropriate awarding body to allow them to decide how the matter will be investigated. All investigation will take place in line with awarding bodies and the JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- The Exams Officer will cooperate fully with any investigation carried out by awarding bodies. Should the awarding body request the investigation be carried out by the centre, they will ensure the awarding body is kept informed at all times
- Is responsible for ensuring any appeals from learners, complaints and re-marks are administered in accordance with awarding body guidelines

Our Exams Officer is Poppy Wells

2.4 Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Advising the exams officer of any changes to curriculum or assessment details for their subjects
- Guidance and pastoral care for candidates who are unsure about exams entries or amendments to entries

- Accurately completing entry and mark sheets, and adhering to deadlines as set by the exams officer
- Accurately completing coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets
- Supplying information about entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Exams Officer
- Notification of access arrangement requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)

2.5 Teaching and Learning Lead

The Teaching and Learning Lead (TLL) fulfils the role of special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) for exams.

Liaising with the Exams Officer, the TLL/SENCO is responsible for:

- Identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements
- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms
- 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

Our Teaching and Learning Lead is Ellie Summers

2.6 Invigilators

Invigilators are responsible for:

- Assisting the Exams Officer to run exams efficiently, according to JCQ regulations
- Collecting exam papers and other materials from the exams office before the start of the exam
- Collecting all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and ensuring they're returned to the exams office

Our Invigilators are Adam Thomas and Vincenzo DeNoia

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

2.7 Candidates

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirming and signing entries
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that confirms the coursework to be their own
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations including but not limited to appropriate dress code, entering the exam late and staying in the exam room for the full length of the exam. In exceptional circumstances permission may be given, by the Exams Officer or invigilator for a candidate to leave the exam early.

3. Qualifications Offered

The qualifications offered at this centre are agreed by the Senior Leadership Team, informed by class teachers input.

We offer the following types of qualifications:

- Entry Level Certificates
- AQA Unit Awards
- Functional Skills

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus for that year.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of subject teachers.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Exams Officer, Heads of Centre and Class Teachers.

4. Exam Series

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in on demand.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in November, March, May and June.

Wherever necessary, internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

The Exams Officer and Class Teachers decide which exam series are used in the centre.

On-demand assessments are to be scheduled in agreement with the Exams Officer.

5. Exam Timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetable for both internal and external exams at a specified date before each series begins. Class Teachers and SLT will be consulted regarding the internal timetable.

6. Entries (including Entry Details and Late Entries)

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Class Teachers.

Candidates or parents/carers cannot request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

Class Teachers will provide estimated entry information to the exams officer to meet JCQ and awarding body deadlines.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Department and Teachers via department meetings, email and internal correspondence.

Late entries are authorised by the Exams Officer.

7. Exam fees

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.

Exam fees are paid by the Centre.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the Centre.

Fee reimbursements are not sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline/fail to sit an exam/do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

8. Access arrangements

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the Teaching and Learning Lead or Specialist Teacher (or external specialist if required).

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams officer.

9. Contingency Planning

The Exams Officer and SLT are responsible for contingency planning.

Contingency plans are available on the Exams Contingency Policy and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

10. Estimated grades

Subject Teachers are responsible for submitting estimated grades based on teacher judgement to the Exams Officer when required by the Exams Officer.

After mock exams, these results inform students' estimated grades.

11. Managing invigilators

Members of teaching and support staff at Drumbeat School & ASD Service are used to invigilate examinations.

12. Malpractice

All cases of suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, maladministration or plagiarism should be reported immediately to the Exams Officer who will contact the appropriate

awarding body to decide how the matter will be investigated. The Head of Centre is responsible for overseeing any investigation of this kind. They will ensure it is thoroughly investigated in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring evidence is considered without bias.

The Exams Officer and the Senior Leadership Team will cooperate fully with any investigation carried out by awarding bodies. Should the awarding body request the investigation be carried out by the centre, they will ensure the awarding body is kept informed at all times.

13. Exam Days

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

The school's Facilities Management Team is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms. Requests for the examination room set up must be logged with the FM team at least 2 weeks prior to the examination.

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 or sections are to be attempted.

In practical exams Class Teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by Class Teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of the session. Papers will be distributed to the Class Teachers at the end of the exam session.

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

After the exam, the Exams Officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed exam scripts to awarding bodies, working in conjunction with likely invigilators and school support staff where necessary.

14. Candidates

The Exams Officer will notify all parents/carers and candidates of their exam submissions in a written letter sent prior to the exam series.

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other 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 or Senior Invigilator.

For exams longer than one hour candidates may leave the exam early, but no sooner than one hour after the published starting time. They will not be allowed to return.

The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.

For clash candidates, the supervision of candidates, identifying a secure venue or arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

15. 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 alter the centre, the Exams Officer or the Exam 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 Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

16. Internal Assessment

It is the duty of class teachers to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

The Teaching and Learning Lead is responsible for moderating all internal assessments for AQA Unit Award qualifications.

The Exams Officer is responsible for moderating all internal assessments of tests and tasks for Pearsons Entry Level and Functional Skill qualifications.

After candidates' work has been assessed and moderated internally, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. This process may lead to mark changes. This process is outside the control of Drumbeat School and is not covered by this procedure.

17. Complaints

All complaints should be made in writing to the Head of Centre as soon as possible and within 3 months of the incident requiring investigation.

Any complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the awarding body's guidance and procedure. A copy of this can be requested from the Exams Officer or Head of Centre.

18. Results

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

Candidates will receive individual results either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses.

EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates or parents/carers if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidate's consent is required before any EAR is requested.

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 support a candidate's or parent's request for 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.

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.

19. Certificates

Certificates are presented in person.

Certificates can be requested on behalf of candidates by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so.

20. Monitoring and Review

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed every 3 years unless there are changes to:

- The exams system
- JCQ, Pearson or AQA guidance
- Our curriculum offer

Next review date: April 2028