



Examinations Policy

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Status: Non-statutory. To be reviewed annually.
Level of approval: Headteacher
Date written: October 2018
Date of most recent approval: October 2018
Date of next review: October 2019

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Introduction

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.

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

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

Exam responsibilities

The Headteacher:

- Has overall responsibility for the school 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 officer¹:

- Manages the administration of internal exams and external exams.
- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Department, teachers and other relevant staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by the various awarding bodies.
- Oversees the production and distribution to all 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 publication *A 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 exam invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams.
- Ensures candidates' controlled assessment marks are submitted, along with any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies, correctly and on schedule.
- Tracks, dispatches, and stores returned controlled assessments.

¹ This is the individual to whom the Headteacher has delegated responsibility for the administration of exams.

- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any post-results service requests.

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Guidance and oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries in their subject(s).
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the exams officer.
- Accurate completion of controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Decisions on post-results procedures.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Supplying information on entries and controlled assessments as required by the Head of Department and/or exams officer.

The **SENDCO** is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they are able to put in place exam day arrangements
- Processing any necessary applications in order to gain approval (if required).
- Working with the exams officer to provide the access arrangements required by candidates in exam rooms.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- 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.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation of entries.
- Understanding controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own, preferably at the start of the course.
- Ensuring they conduct themselves in all exams according to the JCQ regulations.

Qualifications offered

The qualifications offered at Reading Girls' School are decided by the Heads of Department with final approval from SLT.

The types of qualifications offered are BTECs, NCFEs, VCERTs and GCSEs

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the school's prospectus or website. If there is to be a change of specification for the next year, the exams office must be informed by October half-term.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of the Head of Department.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by Head of Department, with final approval from SLT.

Exam series

Internal exams (mock exams) and assessments are scheduled at various times throughout the year.

Other internal exams will take place when deemed necessary in a less formal setting within the current school timetable.

Internal exams are held under external exam conditions and the Head of Department decides which exam series are used.

External exams and assessments are scheduled throughout the year.

The school does offer some assessments on an on-demand basis. If offered, on-demand assessments can be scheduled only in windows agreed between the teachers and the Exams Officer.

Exam timetables

Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal and/or external exams at a specified date before each series begins.

Entries, entry details and late entries

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

The school accepts entries from private candidates who were previously RGS students. (There is usually a £50 administration charge for this.)

The school does not act as an exams centre for other organisations.

Entry deadlines are circulated to Head of Department.

Head of Department 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 authorisation, in writing, of Head of Department.

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.

The exams officer will publish the deadline for actions well in advance for each exam series.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by the school.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the school.

Equality Legislation

All staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of any equality legislation.

The school will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that they provide to candidates in accordance with requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Access arrangements

The SENDCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs and any special arrangements that individual candidates will need during the course and in any assessments/exams. A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENDCO.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of SENDCO.

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

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Exams Officer and SENDCO or the person in the SEN department with exams responsibility, as appointed by the SENDCO.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates, as defined in the JCQ access arrangements regulations, will be organised by the Exams Officer and SENDCO or the person in the SEN department with exams responsibility, as appointed by the SENDCO.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Contingency plans are available at the end of this document and are in line with the guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ and awarding organisations.

Private candidates

Managing private candidates is the responsibility of the Exams Officer

Managing invigilators

External staff will be used to invigilate external examinations.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Trust.

Securing the necessary Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Head's PA.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the school.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the NJC pay scales.

Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained, and briefed by the Exams Officer/ designated Exams Assistant.

Written policy on Disclosure Barring Service (DBS)

All invigilators, once appointed, complete the DBS forms, and once clearance has received from Mrs Clacey, the Exams Officer notifies the new invigilators.

All members of staff have to have DBS clearance before invigilating or working with students at Reading Girls' School.

Invigilators are recruited, trained, briefed and timetabled by the Exams Officer/ designated Exams Assistant.

Malpractice

The Headteacher in consultation with the Exams Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

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 invigilators.

Site management staff are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements.

The Exams Officer, SLT member or Lead Invigilator will start and finish all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates. Any staff present must be in accordance with the rules defined by JCQ concerning who is allowed in the exam room and what they can do.

In practical exams, subject teachers' availability will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

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 to Heads of Department in accordance with JCQ's recommendations and no later than 2 hours after candidates have completed them.

After an exam, the exams officer will arrange for the safe dispatch of completed examination scripts to the awarding bodies.

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 the Exams Officer.

The school's published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the school accepts no liability for their loss or damage. 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. This is particularly true of mobile phones and other electronic communication or storage devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into an exam room.

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 Headteacher or Exams Officer.

Note: Candidates who leave an exam room must be accompanied by an appropriate member of staff at all times.

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

Policy to identify all candidates

As a centre we only accept external candidates who are known to us.

Internal students go to a designated area and are called into the various exam rooms in candidate number order. They are called to the exam room by pastoral leaders, Heads of Department or SLT who know students well and can identify them.

What happens if a student is late?

As a centre we follow the guidance of the ICE booklet.

If a student arrives within 60 minutes of the published or actual start of the exam, the student sits the exam and is given the full time allowance.

If a student arrives one hour after the published or actual start of the exam, this is deemed as very late, and the awarding body will be notified, the student will also be warned verbally by the Exams Officer that the Awarding Body may **not** accept the examination paper.

If a candidate arrives late we generally allow the student to sit the examination with the full time allowance.

If a student is persistently late then SLT will be informed by a Pastoral Leader and/or Exams Officer.

Clash candidates

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

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 relevant Pastoral Leader or Exams Officer to that effect.

The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 5 days of the exam.

The exams officer will make any relevant special consideration application to the relevant awarding body within 7 days of the exam.

Internal assessment

It is the duty of Heads of Department 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.

Marks for all internally assessed work, such as controlled assessment, are provided to the exams office by the Head of Department. The exams officer will inform staff of the date by when appeals against internal assessments must be made. Any appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

Results

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days,

- In person at the school
- By post to their home address - candidates to provide a self-addressed envelope.

The results slip will be in the form of a school produced document.

Arrangements for the school to be open on results days are made by the Headteacher and Exams Officer.

The provision of the necessary staff on results days is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Enquiries about Results (EAR)

EARs may be requested by 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; 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 school or the candidate depending on circumstances.

All decisions on whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by Head of Department. If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and the school will respond by following the process in its Internal Appeals Procedure (IAP) document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams 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 21 days of the receipt of results.

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

An EAR cannot be applied for once an original script has been returned.

Processing of requests for ATS will be the responsibility of Exams Officer.

Certificates

Candidates will receive their certificates in person at the school, collected and signed for.

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 identification with them that confirms who they are.

The school retains certificates for 1 year.

A new certificate will not be issued by an awarding organisation. A transcript of results may be issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

Appendix A

Controlled Assessment Policy

Controlled assessment is a form of internal assessment where the control levels are set for each stage of the assessment process: task setting; task taking and task marking. They have replaced coursework in new GCSE specifications.

Depending on the level of control defined within the specification, controlled assessments may take place in a normal timetabled lesson or other defined session under supervised conditions.

Senior Leadership Team

- Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.
- At the start of the academic year, through SLT links, begin co-ordinating with heads of department/subject to schedule controlled assessments.
- Map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve:
 - Clashes / problems over the timing or operation of controlled assessments.
 - Issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks,
 - time out of school etc.)

Heads of Department

- Ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.
- Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualize sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.
- Supply the exams office details of all unit codes for controlled assessments.
- Ensure that a secure area is available to store candidates' work
- Liaise where necessary with the IT department to ensure controlled computer accounts are created which are able to be locked down when not in use.
- Obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times.
- Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component.
- Plan alternative sessions for absent calendars
- Liaise with the SENDCO for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.

Teaching staff

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*.
- Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.
- Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.

- Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
- Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.
- Ensure candidates' work is secure between assessment sessions (if more than one).
- Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the school.

Exams Officer

- Enter students for controlled assessment units, before the deadline for final entries.
- Where confidential materials are directly received by the exams officer, be responsible for receipt then forward to Heads of Department for secure storage.
- Download and distribute mark sheets for teaching staff to use, and collect and send mark sheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- On the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom, arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out, at the direction of the SLT.

SENDCO

- Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.
- Work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

Appendix B

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT RISK ASSESSMENT

Possible example risks	Forward planning	Task Setting
Assessment schedule clashes with other activities.	Plan/establish priorities at the start of academic year for all subjects.	Plan dates in consultation with school calendar – negotiate with other parties.
Too many assessments close together across subjects or lines of learning	Plan assessments so they are spaced over the duration of the course.	Space assessments to at least allow candidates time between assessments.
Insufficient space in classrooms for candidates.	Once group sizes are known at the start of the year, flag instances where regular classroom space may not be suitable to conduct controlled assessment.	Use more than one classroom or multiple sittings where necessary.
IT system unavailable on day of assessment.	Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date in all cases.	Book IT equipment well ahead and download tasks before scheduled date of Assessment.
Teaching staff/assessors unable to access task details.	Test secure access rights ahead of schedule every year and every session.	Ensure teaching staff/assessors have access rights for correct area of awarding body secure extranet sites ahead of time.
Loss of task details in transmission	Download tasks well ahead of scheduled assessment date.	Report loss to awarding body for replacement; download again.
Candidates absent for all or part of assessment (various reasons.)	Plan alternative session(s) for candidates	Check before booking the date; provide an alternative date, where necessary and consult awarding body procedures for dealing with timetabling clashes N.B. Retakes of controlled assessments are limited.
Candidates have a scheduling clash for exams or assessment.	Always consider candidate timetables well ahead and decide on priorities in advance to scheduling clashes	Check before booking the date; provide an alternative date, where necessary and consult awarding body procedures for dealing with timetabling clashes.
Assessment is undertaken under incorrect level of control (time, resources, supervision and collaboration.)	Ensure teaching staff understand what level is applicable and understand what is involved.	Provide training if required. Seek guidance from the awarding body.
Teaching staff assessors do not understand supervision of controlled assessment is their responsibility.	Ensure teaching staff/assessors understand nature of controlled assessments and their role in supervision.	A suitable supervisor must be arranged for any controlled assessment where a teacher/assessor is not supervising, in line with the awarding body specification.
Suitable supervisor has not been		A suitable supervisor must be

arranged for an assessment where teaching staff/assessors are not supervising.		arranged for any controlled assessment where a teacher assessor is not supervising in line with the awarding body specification.
Teaching staff fail to correctly set tasks.	Ensure teaching staff understand the task setting arrangements as defined in the awarding body specification.	Seek guidance from the awarding body.
Assessments have not been moderated as required in the awarding body specification.	Check specification and plan required moderation appropriately.	Seek guidance from the awarding body.
Assessment tasks not kept secure before assessment.	Ensure teaching staff understand importance of task security.	Request/obtain different assessment tasks.
Candidates' work not kept secure during or after assessment.	Define appropriate level of security, in line with awarding body requirements, for each department as necessary.	Ensure that accounts which can be locked down when not in use are created by IT technicians.
Insufficient or insecure storage space.	Look at provision for suitable storage early in the course.	Find alternative spaces.
Deadlines not met by candidates. Ensure all candidates are briefed on deadlines/penalties for not meeting them.	Candidates to sign agreement at the beginning of the academic year.	Mark what candidates have produced by deadline and seek guidance from awarding body on further action.
Deadlines for marking and/or paperwork not met by teaching staff.	Ensure teaching staff are given clear deadlines (prior to awarding body ones) to complete marking/paperwork.	The exams office can process and send off marks ahead of AB deadlines.
Candidate fails to sign authentication form.	Ensure all candidates have authentication forms to sign and attach to work when it is completed before handing in.	Find candidate and ensure form is signed.
Teaching staff fail to complete authentication forms or leave before completing authentication.	Ensure teaching staff understand importance of authentication forms and the requirement of a signature.	Return form to staff for signature. Ensure forms are signed as work is marked and not at the end of the season.
Teaching staff interpret marking descriptions incorrectly.	Ensure appropriate training and practicing of marking. Plan for sample of marking during the practice phase.	Arrange for remarking. Consult awarding body specification for appropriate procedure..
school does not run standardisation activity as required by the awarding body.	Plan against the requirements for standardisation for the awarding body when and how this activity will be conducted.	Check with the awarding body whether a later standardisation event can be arranged.

Appendix C

Risk Assessment for examination procedure

Risk	Early warning	Control to prevent	Control to resolve
Invigilator does not turn up	Phonecall or scripts not collected	Invigilator timetables – sign tear off slip to confirm dates	On busy days employ emergency invigilator or EO to cover
Fire alarm goes off			Ensure invigilators are aware of policy. SLT to assist in maintaining security of exam. Allocate specific area for exams.
Student taken ill during exam			Invigilator aware of policy, first aider on call. Special Consideration for all students.
Bad weather or transport problems	Weather report	Possible delay to start of exam	Delay start, contact AB, isolation of candidates if late and hold staggered sessions if necessary. Special Consideration
Students do not turn up for exam		Student timetables and information from subject teachers	Pastoral leader to contact student, Exams officer to determine where they sit and who invigilates.
Students turn up who are not entered		Subject teachers/HODs ensure entry checklists are correct	Find a paper, seat them, amend attendance list and make entry. Charge late fee to department. If recurring problem see SLT
Cheating in the room	Invigilator reports problem	Warning to candidate and information from tutor	Invigilator aware of policy, SLT on-call to deal with malpractice issue
Disruption in the room	Invigilator reports problem	Warning to candidate and information from tutors. Information from tutors to EO re problem students in order to isolate.	Invigilator aware of policy, SLT on-call to deal with malpractice issues
Late arrivals	Phone call or just turn up late	Candidate timetable and information from tutors	Invigilator aware of policy. Complete Late arrivals form.
EO does not turn up	Phone call	Regular meetings with line manager	SLT to have backup policy
Exam room flooded	Check room, or invigilator reports problem	Regular premises checks	Find alternative accommodation. Special Consideration

Risk	Early warning	Control to prevent	Control to resolve
Wrong entry made – incorrect paper		Subject teachers/HOD's ensure entry checklists are correct	Contact AB for copy of paper if necessary. Provide exam paper, seat and amend entry.
EO leaves/long term sick	Notification from EO	Regular meeting with line manager	SLT to have backup policy
Curriculum model changes	Government white paper. Information from NAA and QCA, and AB's	Heads of department give exam board information to Exams Officer as early as possible	Planning and Action Plan to implement changes.
Damage to office		Regular premises checks	Need AB's handbooks, new equipment, phone line and office space. Copies of relevant information from HOD's. Contact NAA field support for assistance.
System failure or power cut			Contact IT support or electrician and if necessary NAA field support officer for assistance. Contact AB to inform entries will be late.
Receiving inaccurate or late entry information		Subject teachers/HOD's ensure entry checklists are correct and on time.	Charge late fee to department. If recurring problem see SLT
Change of syllabus and no notification	Pre-release material does not arrive. Materials arrive that are not expected.	Subject teachers/HOD's ensure entry checklists are correct.	Contact AB
HOD long term sick or leaves	Resignation or sick note.		Replacement to be nominated and EO to have input in training.
AB communications systems fail	Papers do not arrive, on-line systems incorrect, difficult to contact by telephone.		Contact NAA to report problem. Give extra time for checking.

Appendix D

Risk Assessment Form (for examination procedures)

Examinations Department		Person completing Assessment	
Activities/Systems being assessed		Signature/Date	

	Activity	Adverse occurrence /dependency	Adverse outcome	Likelihood 1 - 3	Severity 1 - 3	Level of risk (LxS)	Control measures	Person responsible	Results
1	Absence of exams officer due to illness on exams day	EO has keys to exam store, is aware of seating plans, clashes, any special requirements	Exam papers unavailable, delayed start	3	3	9	Duplicate set of keys held by exams assistant + 1 other; adequate instructions available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EO Ex. asst Head of centre 	
2	Computer malfunction	Exam entries, amendments cannot be made by EDI	AB deadlines cannot be made	2	3	6	Notify IT Manager; ensure adequate supplies of paper entry sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EO Head of centre 	
3	Fire during examination	Evacuation of room	Lives endangered, exam scripts spoiled	2	3	6	Invigilators are aware of fire procedure; Adequate fire alarms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EO Head of centre Site mgr 	
4	Fire in sports hall, cannot use for exam	All main exams held in here - seats	Insufficient exam rooms may violate JCQ rules	2	3	6	Adequate fire alarms Contingency plans for spare rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site mgr EO Head of centre 	
5	Non-receipt of exam papers	Unable to hold exam - delayed start	Delays and upset to students	1	3	3	Check paper receipt well in advance – contact exam boards in good time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EO 	
6	Human error	Candidates entered for incorrect tier	Affects student grade	3	2	6	Check of procedures by student (statement of entry) and staff (exam candidate lists)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EO Head of department Student 	