

The Sandon School



EXAMS POLICY

Last Adoption Date: December 2019

Next Review Date: Autumn 2020

Key staff involved in the exams policy

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Andy Weaver (Headteacher)
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader)	Helen Newman (Assistant Headteacher Progress & Standards)
Exams officer	Jo Smith
SENCO	Jacqueline Beavis (Senior Deputy Headteacher)
LT member(s)	Karen Bayley (Business Manager)

Purpose of the policy

1. The Sandon School (School) is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently and in compliance with the published Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) regulations and awarding body requirements.
2. This policy will be communicated to all relevant centre staff via Leadership, Curriculum Team Leader (CTL) and Line Manager meetings.
3. Parents and students will have access to this policy online.

Governing Board

4. Has overall responsibility for this policy and ensuring its implementation.

Head of Centre

5. The Headteacher will be the Head of Centre with overall management of this policy and the roles and responsibilities of staff. He will understand the content, and refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:

- General regulations for approved centres (GR)
- Instructions for conducting examinations (ICE)
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AA)
- Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments (SMEA)
- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments (NEA) (and the instructions for conducting controlled assessment and coursework)
- A guide to the special consideration process (SC)

It is the responsibility of the Head of Centre to ensure that appropriate training and support is given to the relevant senior leader(s), the examinations officer and the SENCO to allow them to discharge their responsibilities.

Assistant Headteacher (Progress & Standards) (AHP&S)

6. The AHP&S will have immediate oversight of the School exams system including the line management of the Exams Officer and will ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to meet the obligations set out in JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres and other annually published JCQ guidance/regulations.
7. In the event of an emergency or staff absence the AHP&S will refer to and implement actions as detailed in the Exam Contingency procedures

Exams Officer (EO)

8. The EO will discharge the specific roles relating to the public examination cycle as outlined in the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres and other annually published JCQ guidance/regulations. In addition, they will:
 - Recruit and train invigilation staff
 - Support JCQ inspection staff during their annual inspection visits
 - Organise the internal exams cycle for Year 10, 11, 12 & 13.
 - Organise Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) testing and progress testing
 - As Centre Administrator, control access by staff to exam board secure sites
 - Organise such other testing which the Head of Centre directs
 - Ensure relevant awarding bodies are informed of any **Conflict of Interest**

- Support SENCO to collect **Personal data consent, Privacy Notice, Access Arrangements Online (AAO) and Data Protection confirmation** forms (candidate personal data consent form)

Curriculum Team Leaders (CTL)/Subject Leaders

9. The CTLs/Subject Leaders along with the Leadership Team and the Head of Centre will decide on the courses to be offered which lead to public examination.
10. The CTLs/Subject Leaders along with their Leadership Team Line Manager will make decisions regarding final entry and (if appropriate) tier of entry.

Centre policies

11. The School will hold and apply the following policies, procedures and plans that are required by JCQ to be in place in all centres:
 - An Incident Management Plan which includes contingencies for disruption to public exams
 - Equality Policy
 - Complaints Policy
 - Safeguarding including Child Protection Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Internal Appeals Procedure Relating to Controlled and Non-Examined Assessments

The public exams cycle for summer exams

12. In the latter part of the summer term the EO will meet with CTLs/Subject Leaders to plan for the following year's internal and public exams.
13. The EO will download and install exam board basedata according to the release schedule published by the individual boards. For internal exams, the EO will create the necessary basedata required to operate the system.
14. The EO working with the SENCO and AHP&S will make online applications for access arrangements (see Appendices 1 & 2).
15. The EO will create arrangements and deadlines for CTLs/Subject leaders to make the initial entry decisions and provide a mechanism for the CTLs/Subject Leaders to confirm these entries in writing prior to submission to the exam boards ahead of the final entry deadline stipulated by the exam boards.
16. The EO will create arrangements and deadlines for CTLs/Subject Leaders to record controlled assessment/practical endorsement/non-examined Assessment/coursework marks and provide a mechanism for the CTLs/Subject Leaders to confirm these marks prior to submission to the exam boards ahead of the final deadline stipulated by the exam boards.
17. The EO will plan the use of rooms for examinations in conjunction with the School Business Manager. The EO will plan invigilation arrangements including where appropriate those required by candidates with agreed access arrangements or special consideration (see Appendix 3).

18. The EO will publish individual provisional and then final exam timetables along with individual JCQ notices to candidates about rules and regulations.
19. The EO will log and check the arrival of secure materials from the exam boards.
20. The AHP&S will ensure that arrangements are in place to allow candidates to appeal against the conduct of and marks awarded for internally assessed components of public examinations. (See Appendix 4).
21. The EO will ensure a member of the Pastoral Team supervises entry to the examination venues and arrange for any absentees to be telephoned.
22. The EO will ensure that examination sessions are conducted according to JCQ Regulations and will report to the AHP&S any issue which is or may possibly be an infringement of the JCQ rules for the conduct of examinations.
23. The EO will log and check the dispatch of scripts to markers and work samples to moderators as required by the specifications being followed.
24. The EO will confirm the timesheets of invigilators as required by the Finance office.
25. The EO will make arrangements for the secure download of results data (including creating embargoes within the School's administration system) and the subsequent publication of results to students and staff.
26. The EO will make arrangements to enable students to initiate "Enquiries About Results" processes (see Appendix 5).
27. The EO will make arrangements to distribute and record the issue of exam board results certificates

Public exams other than those conducted in the summer exams season

28. The same examinations procedures detailed above will be followed for all public exams regardless of the time of year. Deadline dates will be set to comply with external exam board requirements. The EO will work with the CTLs/Subject Leaders to ensure that arrangements are communicated to the candidates.

Internal exams

29. Internal examinations for years 10, 11, 12 & 13 will be carried out as far as possible according to full JCQ rules to ensure candidates become familiar with the requirements and procedures.
30. Candidates who have access arrangements in public exams will have the same support available in internal exams.

Exam fees

31. The School will pay the first exam entry fee for each public examination taken by a student on roll, for an examination for which they have been prepared for at School, providing the student has completed, or at the time of entry is likely to complete, all necessary components required by the specification in advance of the examination. Fees for re-sits are dealt with under the Charging and Remission Policy of the School.

Private candidates

32. The School can act as a centre for private candidates for those specifications which are deemed available for private candidates by the exam boards.
33. Private candidates will be accepted at the discretion of the Head of Centre.
34. Private candidates will be required to pay for all entry fees, invigilation costs and an administration charge.
35. Procedures for specific aspects of the examination process are detailed in the appendices listed below:

Appendix 1	Access Arrangements
Appendix 2	The Use of Word Processors in Exams
Appendix 3	Examination Venues
Appendix 4	Internal Appeals Procedure – Non-Examined Assessments
Appendix 5	Enquiries About Results
Appendix 6	Additional Procedures Related to BTEC and NCFE Qualifications
Appendix 7	Malpractice Procedure for Handling Accusations of Malpractice
Appendix 8	Special Consideration

Adoption

36. This Policy will be well publicised and was adopted by the Governing Board on 2 December 2019 and will be reviewed at least every year.

Appendix 1

ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

This appendix is provided as an exams-specific supplement to the centre-wide Equality Policy and details **the process of reasonable adjustment and adaption relating to candidates who are regarded as having a disability for equality reasons.**

Applications for access arrangements will usually originate from one of the below possible sources:

1. Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
2. Students with a physical disability or other medical condition that is likely to affect performance in an examination
3. Students with a temporary condition or illness which may arise at the time of the examination
4. Observations from teaching/support staff
5. Parents/candidates themselves

EHCP/medical advice

The SENCO will support the EO who will apply for the access arrangements stipulated in the EHCP. Additional supportive evidence will be gathered from the class teachers of the candidate concerned.

Students with a physical disability or other medical condition that is likely to affect performance in an examination

The AHP&S or SENCO will use the information provided by a medical practitioner to initiate a survey of the current classroom teachers concerned. If the information provided suggests access arrangements may need to be put in place, then testing by the designated qualified assessor will be commissioned. The outcome of the test and the evidence from staff will be used to support an appropriate application.

Students with a temporary condition or illness which may arise at the time of the examination

The AHP&S and EO will use the information provided by a medical practitioner to ensure that students with emergency (temporary) access arrangements have the appropriate access arrangements applied for at the time of their examinations.

Observations from the teaching/support staff

When a potential need is highlighted by a member of staff and the candidate does not have an EHCP/medical diagnosis on file, the AHP&S will initiate a survey of need from the current classroom teachers of the candidate concerned. If the information provided suggests access arrangements may need to be put in place, then testing by the designated qualified assessor will be commissioned. The outcome of the test and the evidence from staff will be used to support an appropriate application.

Parents/candidates themselves

Where a parent makes a request the AHP&S will initiate a survey of the current classroom teachers of the candidate concerned. If the information provided suggests access arrangements may need to be put in place, then testing by the designated qualified assessor will be commissioned. The outcome of the test and the evidence from staff will be used to support an appropriate application.

Access arrangements testing commissioned privately by parents does not have to be accepted by the School. Such tests will only be considered for acceptance if the report is from an appropriately qualified assessor and provides the age standardised score information required by the exam boards. The report must comply with the JCQ rules concerning the timing of such reports.

Communication

Students and parents will receive written confirmation from the EO as to the success or otherwise of the application.

If parents are not happy with the conduct of the application process they can deal with this matter under the School's Complaints Policy.

Implementing access arrangements and the conduct of exams

For all external assessments and internal exams where candidates have been identified as requiring access arrangements, the EO with the support of the AHP&S, SENCO and other relevant centre staff will ensure that the appropriate arrangements, adjustment and adaptation are in place to facilitate access for candidates where they are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act (unless emergency arrangements is required at the time of an exam).

For Non-Examination Assessments (NEA) the EO with the support of the AHP&S and SENCO will liaise with teaching staff to ensure the implementation of the appropriate access arrangement for those identified candidates.

Appendix 2

THE USE OF WORD PROCESSORS IN EXAMS

Candidates can be granted the use of a word processor in public examinations

- if the use of a word processor is a student's normal way of working during lessons and assessment AND
 - if it is appropriate to their needs and may include
 - an EHCP which details the candidate should use a word processor.
 - a specific learning difficulty which has a substantial and long term effect on the candidate's ability to write legibly
 - a medical condition
 - a physical disability
 - a sensory impairment
 - poor handwriting - this will have been the result of an agreement between the School and the candidate and their parents
1. An application for access arrangements has stipulated that the candidate is eligible for a scribe but the candidate would prefer to use a word processor.
 2. The candidate's normal way of working in school is to take their own word processor to lessons and use it routinely in the completion of work. This will have been the result of an agreement between the School and the candidate and their parents because of issues relating to the legibility of a candidate's handwriting or a relevant diagnosed medical condition.

The only exception to the above would be to offer a candidate the use of a word processor if they have suffered a temporary injury which makes it impossible/very difficult for them to handwrite their examination scripts and the candidate would prefer not to use the services of a scribe.

The centre will not simply grant the use of a word processor to a candidate because they prefer to type rather than write or can work faster on a keyboard, or because they use a laptop at home.

Appendix 3

EXAMINATION VENUES

The EO will select appropriate venues which comply with JCQ regulations. It is expected that as far as possible all candidates should experience the same environment for an examination.

Candidates may be able to undertake exams in an alternative venue from all other candidates in the following circumstances:

1. They have an EHCP which stipulates that the candidate needs to sit exams in a smaller room with fewer candidates present.
2. They have a medical diagnosis which requires the candidate to sit exams in a smaller room with fewer candidates present.

Individual invigilation

1. Candidates where their access arrangements require the use of a scribe will be invigilated individually.
2. Candidates where separate invigilation is in the best interests of all candidates.

Appendix 4

INTERNAL APPEALS PROCESS – NON-EXAMINED ASSESSMENTS, Coursework and Controlled Assessment

Conduct of the assessment

Where a candidate has a concern about the conduct of a non-examined assessment they can appeal to the AHP&S who will look into their concerns and make recommendations as necessary.

To appeal the candidate must write or send an e-mail to the AHP&S which details the grounds on which they would like to appeal.

All concerns about the process should be logged with the AHP&S before the publication of marks to candidates.

Marks awarded

Candidates will be told the raw mark which the School will be submitting for all internally assessed units of work on their behalf.

Candidates who feel that their non-examined assessment has been marked incorrectly should contact the CTL/Subject Leader concerned within seven working days of receipt of marks to seek advice. The CTL/Subject Leader will, at the candidate's request, supply an appropriate mark scheme and copies of the candidate's work. Candidates will not have access to original work. CTLs/Subject Leaders will also be able to confirm to the candidate whether the mark awarded has already been subject to moderation/internal verification.

To appeal, the candidate must write or send an e-mail to the AHP&S which details the grounds on which they would like to appeal. They must do this within seven working days of the receipt of the copied work from the CTL/Subject Leader.

The AHP&S will investigate the appeal and report back to the candidate the outcome. The decision of the AHP&S is final.

Appendix 5

ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS (EAR)

Initial enquiries about results

All EAR processes are only carried out with the written consent of the candidate. The services to be provided under EAR are those published annually by JCQ.

The EO will act as facilitator and make available to candidates guidance on how to go about making an application for an EAR.

EARs will not be initiated until payment is received from the candidate concerned.

The School staff will offer advice and guidance on the process but the final decision about initiating an EAR rests with the candidate.

Where School staff have concerns about the marking of a whole cohort, they will discuss this matter with the AHP&S and where necessary follow the process outlined in the EAR documentation published by JCQ.

Appeals

If a candidate wishes to appeal the outcome of an EAR, the process requires the support of the Head of Centre and is outlined in the EAR documentation published by JCQ.

If the Head of Centre does not agree with the grounds for appeal outlined by the candidate, the Centre may choose not instigate the appeal.

All appeal costs are usually paid by the candidate.

Appendix 6

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES RELATED TO BTEC and NCFE QUALIFICATIONS

The School has chosen to offer BTEC qualifications as published by Pearson and NCFE qualifications. In addition to the provisions within the School's Exams, Equality and Complaints Policies there are additional processes required by Pearson and NCFE to comply with their requirements in order to run these courses.

Recruitment onto courses

Recruitment onto the course shall be carried out with the interests of the candidate to the fore and will include:

- Publication of a course outline including references to the specific exam board information such as websites and/or specification details
- An opportunity to discuss the course requirements and suitability of the candidates with subject staff and other colleagues

Registration

All candidates who were registered with the School's Management Information System as following a course of study will be registered by the deadline for registrations specified by the exam board. The list of candidates will be confirmed by the CTL/Subject Leader.

This registration will be carried out by the School's EO and will be made in good time to meet the board's annually published deadline.

Assessment and internal verification procedures

The School will follow annually updated BTEC and NCFE Centre Guides produced by the exam board with regard to Internal Assessment, Internal Verification, Lead Internal Verifiers (IV).

Prior to starting an assessment, the assessor must ensure that each student understands: the assessment requirements including those relating to declaration of authenticity and referencing; submission deadlines as set out in the assessment plan; rules relating to agreed extensions. Assessor feedback and internal verification must be completed in accordance with exam board rules and on exam board approved documents within the specified time set out in the assessment plan.

The Lead IV may authorise a student one opportunity to resubmit evidence to meet an assignment's assessment criteria if: the student has met the initial deadline /agreed extension; the assessor judges that the student will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance; the original work has been authenticated by both the student and the teacher. In such cases, the resubmission must be: recorded on the assessment feedback form; completed within 15 School days of the student receiving feedback from assessment; undertaken by the student without any further guidance; declared authentic as per the original submission.

In exceptional circumstances, the Lead IV may authorise one retake opportunity to meet the pass criteria only if: the student has not achieved the targeted pass criteria following resubmission of the assignment; the retake is a new task targeted at only the pass criteria; an agreed deadline is agreed and recorded between the assessor and the student; the work

is declared authentic as per the original and re-submissions; a full paper trail of all student work from resubmissions and re takes is available for standards verification.

If there are any identified weaknesses in the assessment process the Lead Internal Verifier, with appropriate support from the AHP&S will offer support and guidance including ensuring appropriate actions are implemented.

- Internal Assessment
- Internal Verification
- Lead Internal Verifiers

Candidates with concerns/complaints

Candidates with concerns/complaints may question the outcome of an individual internally assessed unit by following the process laid down in Appendix 4- Internal Appeals Process – Non-Examined Assessment.

Certification Claims

Claims for certification of achievement for an overall qualification will be made by the EO. The EO will process the claim working alongside the CTL/Subject Leader for the individual course. This provides for a visual check on the information inputted onto the exam board's secure website to ensure that errors are avoided.

All candidates who have completed the required units of study shall have a qualification claim made for them.

Where a candidate has not successfully completed enough units to be awarded the planned qualification there are two further options that the School will routinely investigate:

- If there is a lower qualification which the units successfully completed can be used to gain, then the School will claim the lower award.
- Where there is no lower award option available, where possible individual units will be claimed thereby allowing units to be carried forward to be used by the candidate in the future with a different provider.

Appendix 7

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING ACCUSATIONS OF MALPRACTICE

Malpractice by centre staff

This will be dealt with by following JCQ guidelines and completion of M1 Form.

It will also be dealt with under the School's Staff Disciplinary Policy.

Candidates should not be disadvantaged by the actions of centre staff. The exam board will be consulted as to how best to avoid any penalty/sanction against the candidates involved.

Malpractice by candidates

Candidates will receive induction at the start of the course indicating what is meant by the term malpractice, including a clear definition of plagiarism.

If malpractice is discovered prior to signature declaration of authenticity:

1. The candidate will be confronted with the allegation and the evidence. Where necessary interviews with other candidates will be held.
2. The candidate will have the opportunity to consider and to respond to the allegation.
3. Parents will be told of the allegation.
4. The CTL/Subject Leader in conjunction with the AHP&S will agree on an appropriate course of action which could be:
 - a. No further action as the allegation has not been proved
 - b. The candidate is asked to undertake an alternative piece of work (if this is allowed under the particular specification being followed) to replace the work/section which is subject to the malpractice claim
 - c. Marking of the original work proceeds but work which is of a questionable authenticity is not credited.
5. Notification to the exam board will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines

If malpractice is discovered after the signature declaration of authenticity

1. Notification to the exam board will be in accordance with JCQ guidelines (assuming the board did not bring the matter to the School's attention in the first place).
2. Parents will be informed of the allegations and the possible sanctions if the allegations are proved. They will also have the process of investigation outlined to them.
3. The School will carry out an investigation in accordance with the requirements of JCQ guidelines and submit its findings to the exam board.
4. The School will share the findings of the exam board with the candidate including any appeals procedures that may be open to the exam board.

Appendix 8

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

JCQ allows for exam boards to be notified of any issue which may have an unexpected and potentially detrimental effect on the performance of students in exams.

The School will support applications for special consideration at the discretion of the Head of Centre. The Head of Centre must be mindful of the need to be fair to all candidates when considering whether to support an application.

All applications for special consideration are processed by the EO. Applications supported by evidence have a better chance of being successful and therefore candidates seeking special consideration will be encouraged to provide written evidence. This may include doctors' notes, written statements from third parties or from invigilation staff.

Special consideration adjustments are routinely very small. The success or failure of the application will be made known to candidates once the outcome is received from the exam boards.