

Exams Policy

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.

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

The Exams Policy will be reviewed annually by the Examinations Officer.

Exam Responsibilities

The Examinations Officer manages the administration of public and internal exams, including:

- advises SLT, subject, class teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies
- oversees the production and distribution to staff, trustees 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
- consult with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines (where appropriate to specific subjects and boards).
- provide and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- administers access arrangements with the member of staff responsible for SEND and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ publications access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration 2018-19
- identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- ensures staff invigilators are trained and responsible for conduct in examinations
- check staff have submitted online candidates' coursework marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangements requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course)
- Submission of candidates' names to heads of department/school/curriculum
- Ensuring they have a clear understanding of the subject/course they are delivering and all appropriate

requirements and deadlines.

The SENDCO is responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- 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.
- leading the access arrangements process within the centre, with the full support of the teaching staff, SLT and Examination Officer.

Invigilators are responsible for:

- Following all JCQ regulations and school procedures for conducting exams.
- 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 their return to the back Office.

Candidates are responsible for:

- Signing an agreement/ letter to abide by school and examination board rules and regulations.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Qualifications

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Headmistress. The qualifications offered are GCSE, iGCSE and BTECs. The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the options booklet for that year. If there has been a change of specification from the previous year, the Examinations Officer must be informed by 9/09/2021.

Informing the Exams Officer 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 in consultation with the candidates, parents, SENDCO, subject teachers and Head of Department.

Exam Season

Internal exams and assessments are scheduled in late May. External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June. Internal exams are held under external exam conditions. The Head of Department decides which exam series are used in the school.

Exam Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetable for both internal and external exams. The final GCSE examination timetable will also be published on the school website.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of Department and subject teachers. Candidates or parents can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The school does not accept entries from external candidates. The school occasionally acts as an examination centre for other organisations, this will be at the discretion of the Head and additional fees may be charged. Entry deadlines are circulated to Heads of Departments via email and noticeboard. Late entries are authorised by Heads of Department. GCSE re-sits are allowed provided this service is provided by specific exam boards. Re-sit decisions will be made in consultation with candidates, subject teachers and Heads of Departments.

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.

GCSE modules and examination fees are paid by parents but inclusive in the annual fees. Retakes are all chargeable to individual students on receipt of a signed authorisation from parents. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to collect consent forms and fees (in the form of a cheque or to be added to fees). This information must then be passed on to the Examinations Officer and Bursar. Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments.

Fee reimbursements are 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.

Disability Discrimination Act

All exam centre staff must ensure that they meet the requirements of the disability under the Equality Act 2010. It introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education. 'A person has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The school will meet the disability provisions under the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improving candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Headmistress and Examinations Officer.

Our Equality Policy is an integral part of our teaching and learning across the curriculum and as such is applied to all GCSE examinations e.g. ordering enlarged paper, use of scribes and readers. All pupils have full access to all examination rooms. Candidates are consistently monitored and access arrangements are applied for throughout the academic year.

Access Arrangements

The SENDCO will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENDCO can then inform

individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam. A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the SENDCO. Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of both the SENDCO and Examinations Officer. Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer and SENDCO. Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENDCO with the Examinations Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENDCO with the Examinations Officer.

Overseas Pupils

Managing overseas pupils is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of SLT. The school has a contingency plan which is shared with all relevant individuals.

Estimated Grades

Heads of Department are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the Examinations Officer when requested by the Examinations Officer.

Managing Invigilators

Teachers are used to invigilate examinations. These invigilators will be used for internal and external exams. Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Examinations Officer. Regular training takes place for all staff and is part of the whole school inset programme.

Malpractice

The Examinations Officer is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam Days

The Examinations 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. The Caretakers are responsible for setting up the allocated rooms on written instruction from the Examinations Officer.

If the packet of question papers is to be split, the question paper packet must be opened in the secure room and not in the examination room. This must be done in the presence of two members of staff, who should be the Examinations Officer and/or Assistant Examinations Officer and/or relevant invigilator. The question paper packet must always be re-sealed and placed back into the centre's secure storage facility. The question papers extracted from the packet will be taken to the allocated room in a sealed envelope. An invigilator must be present in the room at all times. Question papers must not be left unattended.

The Examinations Officer will usually start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

No member of staff is allowed in the examination room for their own subject's exam or near any of their subject's examination materials except where specifically authorised by the board via the Examinations Officer.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Unused papers will be distributed to Heads of Departments at the end of the exam session.

Candidates

The school'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 Examinations Officer or invigilator.

Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times. The Examinations 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 and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Examinations Officer.

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 alert the school, the Examinations 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 Examinations Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the end of the applicable exam series.

Internal Assessments and Appeals

Internal assessment replaces the largely discontinued term coursework. It is the duty of Heads of Departments to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time and to ensure that Reception keeps a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent. A copy of all such records should be forwarded by Reception to the Examinations Officer.

Pupil Appeals Procedure for Internal Assessments

Internally Assessed Components for External Qualifications are conducted in accordance with the Awarding Body regulations for the subject specification of the qualification concerned, together with the School Policy and Procedures regarding Internally Assessed Components for External Qualifications and the appropriate Departmental Policy and Procedures regarding Internally Assessed Components for External Qualifications. Copies of these policies are available on request.

If a student feels that requirements, policies and procedures may not have been followed in relation to the assessment of their work, they may use the Appeals Procedure outlined below. Appeals may be made regarding the process, which led to the award of the mark, or to the mark awarded, or both.

Appeals Procedure

1. Candidates will receive their marks in internally assessed components once authentication statements have been signed and all marking and internal moderation procedures have been completed. Marks will be given to students before the appeals window opens or in some cases much earlier.
2. Appeals can only be made by the student and will only be accepted via the student emailing coursewkapp@hollygirt.notts.sch.uk using their Hollygirt email account.

The dates for 2021 will be published to parents/pupils in written communication and on the website.

3. Appeals (using the route in paragraph 2 above) should give full details of the grounds for the appeal and clearly indicate whether the appeal is in relation to the mark awarded or the process which led to that mark being awarded, or both. It is not possible to operate a staged process of first appealing one aspect and then in the event that the appeal is not successful appealing the other.
4. Hollygirt School will make a charge of £50 to cover the cost of administration incurred for dealing with each appeal. Requesting an appeal constitutes an acceptance of the charge. The £50 fee will be refunded in the event that the appeal is successful. The appeal procedure will only begin on receipt of the £50 fee. This fee needs to be paid within the appeals window to allow sufficient time for review of marking. The £50 fee can be paid via BACS through the bursar or by cheque or cash via the Examinations Officer. If paying via BACS the payment needs to be headed APPEAL FEE so the Examinations Officer can be alerted to start the appeal process.
5. Candidates are advised that as with Ofqual requirements for an enquiry about results on written papers, as a result of an appeal of the mark for a coursework/controlled assessment component (i) the mark may be lowered as well as raised and (ii) if the original mark is considered reasonable in the view of the reviewer, it must stand.
6. Candidates must also be aware that internally assessed work for external qualifications is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation may change the marks awarded for internally assessed work. This is outside the control of Hollygirt School and is not covered by this procedure. Students cannot request a 'review of marking' from the examination boards for coursework based units on receipt of their results.
7. All appeals will be administered by the Examinations Officer.
8. Where the appeal relates to the mark awarded, the Examinations Officer will liaise with the Head of Department in the subject concerned. In the first instance, a review of the mark awarded will be carried out either by a member of staff with appropriate competence who has had no previous involvement in the initial assessment and has no personal interest in the review or an external assessor of comparable competence.
9. In the event that there is no member of staff with appropriate competence who has not had involvement with the initial assessment available, Hollygirt School will liaise with the Head of Department in the subject concerned to identify a reviewer with appropriate competence at another centre. In both cases, the reviewer will ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.

10. Where the appeal relates to the process, the Examinations Officer will conduct the investigation, reviewing the process used in the department for internal assessment and decide whether it conformed to the requirements of JCQ, the awarding body, and the college and Departmental Policies and Procedures regarding Internal Assessment of components for External Qualifications.
11. The Examinations Officer (via the appeals email) will report the outcome of the appeal to the candidate as soon as practicable and normally within 5 working days of the appeal being lodged.
12. Where an appeal relating to the mark awarded is upheld, the candidate and awarding body will be informed of the new mark (which could be lower, the same or higher and cannot be re-appealed).
13. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Headmistress, and a written record of the appeal kept and made available to the awarding body at their request.
14. In the event that the Examinations Officer is unable to administer an appeal or conduct an investigation into process, the Deputy Head will undertake these duties.
15. There is no further right of appeal, but in the event that a candidate has concerns about any aspect of the conduct of the appeal, he/she must raise these with the Headmistress who will investigate as appropriate under the college Complaints Procedure.

Results

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at school or by post to their home address. Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Headmistress. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Headmistress.

Post Results

If component marks are not reported on candidate results slips, then to obtain further details, candidates must contact their subject teacher who may be in on results day. If they are not in, then they can be contacted when back in school in term time.

Subject teachers should also be consulted before requesting a review of results. Reviews of results are inadvisable as most do not result in a change of grade and are expensive. It is only on rare occasions that grades are altered. The examination boards have careful checking procedures and particular attention is paid to those marks on the borderline of grade boundaries. If a candidate was estimated a grade 7 and gained a grade 2 but had worked effectively and had no concerns after the exam, then an error may have occurred. If that candidate gained a grade 6, it is highly unlikely that any error was made and the grade is likely to be a true reflection of how they performed in the examination relative to the other candidates across the country.

If a college place depends on it, then an urgent review can be placed with the Exams Officer on the morning of results day or by 11.00am the following day. The Exams Officer must receive the correct consent form signed by the candidate, with correct payment, no later than 11.00am on the day after results day. Any later queries or reviews must first be discussed with the subject teacher during term time.

Reviews of Results (RORs)

RORs include clerical checks, post results reviews of marking, and photocopies of scripts. A post results review of marking is a review of the original marking to ensure that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly. It checks the totalling of marks and the correct application of grade thresholds. It is different to a remark which boards do not offer. A clerical check is just a review of mark totalling for all parts of the script and that grade boundaries etc. have been applied correctly. Photocopies of script can be requested either before choosing to have it reviewed, or after it has been reviewed.

RORs may be requested by candidates or centre staff if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidate's consent is required before any ROR is requested. Candidates must sign the appropriate consent form, both of which can be found on the school website GCSE page. It is important to note that grades can go up or down and therefore candidate consent is required for a clerical check or a review of marking.

For candidate RORs, payment of the relevant fee is required together with the correct consent form, before the request is placed. This may be by cheque to the Exams Officer or by bank transfer. Notification by email to ROR@hollygirt.notts.sch.uk is necessary in either case to confirm that the transfer has been placed or the cheque delivered to school. Alternatively, a message can be left with reception or the school office to notify ROR@hollygirt.notts.sch.uk by email. Signed consent forms can be delivered to school or a scan emailed as an attachment to ROR@hollygirt.notts.sch.uk. Requests for RORs will not be accepted without payment in advance and consent form signed by the candidate.

Deadlines and costs will be notified by letter with results on results day but consents and fees are typically freed by about 15th September. In August 2018 costs were up to: £47 for a review of marking; £14.35 for a script photocopy; and £16.90 for a clerical check. AQA do not give pre review scripts, OCR scripts can only be applied for during results week and Pearson have most scripts free online. Candidate's signed consent is required in all cases before access is permitted.

Boards will complete a clerical check within 10 days and a review of marking within 20 days of receiving the request.

A clerical check or review is refunded if the grades are altered up or down. An altered grade is **final** and cannot revert.

Access to Scripts

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request a photocopy of their marked script. School staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. In all cases, the consent of candidates must be obtained. GCSE reviews of marking cannot be applied for once an actual script has been returned, which is why photocopies are requested prior to reviews.

Certificates

Certificates are presented to pupils in person. Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so. The school keeps certificates for one year.

Updated July 2020