

# EXAMINATION POLICY

**Approved by: Fortis Academy Council**

**Date: September 2020**

**Review date: September 2021**

This policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams

**Responsibility: Head of Centre  
Chris Czepukojc**

## 1. Introduction and Aims

Fortis Academy 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
- 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 awarding bodies

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

### 2.1 Everyone

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

### 2.2 Head of Centre

The Head of Centre is the individual who is accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is always compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements in order to ensure the security and integrity of the examinations/assessments.

- Has overall responsibility for the Fortis Academy as an exams centre
- Is responsible for ensuring that all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice are reported, in line with the JCQ guidance on [Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures](#)

For details about specific head of centre responsibilities, see sections 1, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 24, Appendix 1, section 6 (Introduction) and Appendix 8. (ICE).

Examples of responsibilities include:

#### **National Centre Number Register**

- Takes responsibility for confirming, on an annual basis, that they are aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ's regulations by responding to the head of centre's declaration which is managed as part of the National Centre Number Register (NCNR) annual update
- Understands that this responsibility cannot be delegated to a member of the senior leadership team or the examinations officer, and acknowledges that failure to respond to the NCNR annual update, and/or the head of centre's declaration, will result in:
  - the centre status being suspended
  - the centre not being able to submit examination entries

- the centre not receiving or being able to access question papers

### **Senior leaders**

- Are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
  - [General Regulations for Approved Centres](#)
  - [Instructions for Conducting Examinations](#)
  - [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments](#)
  - [Suspected Malpractice - Policies and Procedures](#)
  - [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments \(and the instructions for conducting coursework\)](#)
  - [A guide to the special consideration process](#)

### **Recruitment, selection and training of staff**

- Retains a workforce of an appropriate size and competence, including sufficient managerial and other resource, to undertake the delivery of the qualification as required by an awarding body. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications
- Provides fully qualified teachers to mark non-examination assessments, and/or fully qualified assessors for the verification of centre-assessed components
- Enables the relevant senior leader(s), the examinations officer (EO) and the SENDCo to receive appropriate training and support in order to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments within the centre, and ensure compliance with the published JCQ regulations
- Appoints a SENDCo who will determine appropriate arrangements for candidates with learning difficulties and disabilities

### **Internal governance arrangements**

- Has in place a written escalation process should the head of centre, or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination administration, be absent

### **Escalation Process**

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that his centre has in place a written escalation process should the head of centre, or a member of the senior leadership team with oversight of examination administration, be absent (GR 5.3)

- Has in place a member of the senior leadership team who will provide support and guidance to the examinations officer and ensure that the integrity and security of examinations and assessments is maintained throughout an examination series
- Ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the EO
- Makes sure that a teacher, a tutor or a senior member of centre staff who teaches the subject being examined, is not an invigilator during an examination

### **Delivery of qualifications**

- Delivers qualifications, as required by the awarding body, in accordance with relevant equality legislation. This includes but is not limited to ensuring that qualifications are made available to all candidates capable of undertaking them and seeking reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates
- Enables candidates to receive sufficient and up to date laboratory experience, or relevant training where required by the subject concerned

### **Public liability**

- Complies with local health and safety rules which are in place and that the centre is adequately covered for public liability claims

### **Security of assessment materials**

- Takes all reasonable steps to maintain the integrity of the examinations/assessments, including the security of all assessment materials, by ensuring:
  - the location of the centre's secure storage facility in a secure room solely assigned to examinations for the purpose of administering secure examination materials
  - appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that confidential materials are only handed over to authorised members of centre staff
  - access to the secure room and secure storage facility is restricted to the authorised two to six keyholders (ensuring only persons authorised by the head of centre and the exams officer are allowed access to the centre's secure storage facility as one of the two to six key holders)
  - the relevant awarding body is immediately informed if the security of question papers or confidential supporting instructions is put at risk
  - that arrangements are in place to check that the correct question paper packets are opened by authorised members of centre staff
- Makes arrangements to receive, check and store question papers and examination material safely and securely at all times and for as long as required in accordance with the current JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
- Makes arrangements to receive and issue material received from the awarding bodies to staff and candidates, and notify them of any advice and instructions relevant to the examinations and assessments
- Allows candidates access to relevant pre-release materials on, or as soon as possible after, the date specified by the awarding bodies
- Obtains written approval from the relevant awarding body before permitting a third party to deliver any part of a qualification including assessments
- Through taking an ethical approach and working proactively to avoid malpractice among students and staff takes all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice/maladministration before, during the course of and after examinations have taken place
- Ensures irregularities are investigated and informs the awarding bodies of any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration, involving a candidate or a member of staff, are reported to the awarding body immediately
- Ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place (that allow the senior leadership team to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence)

### **Centre inspections**

- Co-operates with the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, an awarding body or a regulatory authority when subject to an inspection, an investigation or an unannounced visit, and takes all reasonable steps to comply with all requests for information or documentation made by an awarding body or regulatory authority as soon as is practical
- Allows all venues used for examinations and assessments, paperwork and secure storage facilities to be open to inspection
- Understands the JCQ Centre Inspector will identify him/herself with a photo ID card and must be accompanied throughout his/her tour of the premises, including inspection of the centre's secure storage facility
- Our head of centre is Chris Czepukojc.

### **2.3 Exams Manager**

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

- Completes/submits the National Centre Number Register annual update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR <https://ocr.org.uk/administration/ncn-annual-update/>) by the end of October each year

- Manage the administration of internal and external exams
- Advise the SLT, subject and class tutors, and other relevant support staff on annual exams timetables and procedures as set by awarding bodies
- Oversee the production and distribution of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicate regularly with staff about imminent deadlines and events. This calendar must be provided to all staff and candidates
- Ensure that candidates/parents are informed of, and understand, aspects of the exams timetable that affect them
- Check with teaching staff that the necessary coursework and/or controlled assessments are completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Observes each awarding body's terms and conditions for the entry and withdrawal of candidates for their examinations and assessments
- Provide and confirm detailed data on estimated entries and oversee submission to exam boards
- Maintain systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams
- Oversee the receiving, checking and secure storage all exam papers and completed scripts.
- Ensures the integrity and security of any electronic question paper is maintained during the downloading, printing and collating process (ensuring printing is carried out in an area that can be controlled to prevent unauthorised personnel accessing live assessment materials and ensuring only authorised members of centre staff have access to electronic question papers)
- In order to avoid potential breaches of security, ensures care is taken to ensure the correct question paper packets are opened by ensuring a member of centre staff, additional to the person removing the papers from secure storage, e.g. an invigilator, checks the day, date, time, subject, unit/component and tier of entry, if appropriate, immediately before a question paper packet is opened
- Ensures this additional/second check is recorded
- Oversee the dispatch of scripts per the guidelines
- Administer access arrangements and make applications for special consideration following the regulations in the JCQ Guide to special consideration process: [A-guide-to-the-spec-con-process-202021-Website-version.pdf](#)
- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes
- Account for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Line manage the Exams Officer in organising the rota, payment, recruitment, training, and monitoring of a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams
- 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, and forward, in consultation with the SLT, any post-results service requests
- Report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice, in line with the JCQ guidance on suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Advise on appeals and re-marks
- Our Exams Manager is Mandy Johnson
- Our Exams Officer is Carol Payton

#### **2.4 Directors of Subject**

Directors of Subject are responsible for:

- Advising the exams officer of any changes to syllabus or assessment details for their subjects
- Advising the exams officer of entries for their subjects, this includes accurate entry codes and qan codes.
- Checking exam entries and ensuring all key deadlines are adhered too.
- 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
- Decisions on post-results procedures

#### **2.5 Teachers**

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supplying information about entries, coursework and controlled assessments as required by the Director of Subject and/or the exams officer.

#### **2.6 Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENDCo)**

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Identifying and testing candidates' requirements for access arrangements and notifying the exams officer in good time so that they can put exam day arrangements in place by:
  - Applying for **approval** through **Access arrangements online** (AAO) via the **Centre Admin Portal** (CAP), where required or through the awarding body where qualifications sit outside the scope of AAO
  - Keeps a file for each candidate for JCQ inspection purposes containing all the required documentation (if documentation is stored electronically, an e-folder must be created for each individual candidate. Employs good practice in relation to the Equality Act 2010
  - Liaises with the EO regarding exam time arrangements for access arrangement candidates
  - Ensures staff appointed to facilitate access arrangements for candidates are appropriately trained and understand the rules of the particular arrangement(s) and keeps a record of the content of training provided to facilitators for the required period
  - Works with the EO to ensure invigilators and those acting as a facilitator fully understand the respective role and what is and what is not permissible in the exam room
  - Provides and annually reviews a centre policy on the **use of word processors** in exams and
- Our SENDCos are Sarah Minshull (to January 2021, thereafter Beth Hooper) and Alex Hough

### 2.7 Lead invigilator(s)

The lead invigilator(s) are responsible for:

- Assisting the exams manager to run exams efficiently, according to JCQ regulations
- Collecting exam papers and other material 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. Assisting the Exam Officer in the sequencing, checking and despatch of the exam papers

The Lead Invigilator is allocated to the Exam by the Exam Officer and can vary as we have several experienced in the role.

### 2.8 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

## 3. Qualifications Offered

The Executive Headteacher, Headteacher and SLT decide the qualifications we offer. We offer the following types of qualifications: GCSE, BTEC, A Level and, by exception, Entry Level.

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any school year may be found in our options booklet. As a rule, external examinations are sat in the final year of a students' key stage (ie at the end of Year 11 or Y13). However, where an exam syllabus requires it (for example in the case of modules) or by exception with the agreement of the Head of Centre students may sit examinations at an alternative time. We may use Entry Level qualifications in Y9, Y10, Y11 where we feel this is appropriate for an individual, this will be by exception.

If there will be a change to a specification for the next year (eg switching from OCR to AQA, this must be discussed with the SLT Line Manager and the exams office must be informed by 30/09/20 of Year 10.

Informing the exams office of changes to a specification is the responsibility of Directors of Subject or a member of the SLT. Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken by Directors of Subject in consultation with teachers and the SENDCo. However, any withdrawals from qualification (including proposed move to a lower level) must be approved by the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher Sixth Form as appropriate.

## 4. Exam Series

For students taking external examinations this academic year, internal mock and assessments are scheduled in December 2020 and April 2021. These are held under exam conditions. It is expected that all subjects will offer an appropriate examination, unless by exception it is agreed not to with the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher (Sixth Form) as appropriate. Under normal circumstances external exams and assessments begin, in the main, in May 2021. Examinations scheduled at any other times are made known to individual students as appropriate.

For the academic year 2020/21 we reserve the right to adapt our policies and contingency arrangements in line with government guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/responsibility-for-autumn-gcse-as-and-a-level-exam-series/public-health-arrangements-for-autumn-exams>

## 5. 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.

## 6. Entries (including entry details and late entries)

Candidates or parents/carers may request subject entry, change of level or withdrawal, however where the teacher/Director of Subject and parent/student disagree, the final decision lies with the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher (Sixth Form) as appropriate.

We do not accept entries from private candidates. We do not act as an exams centre for other organisations. Entry deadlines are circulated to Directors of Subject via e-mail. Directors of Subject 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 require authorisation, in writing, by the Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher (Sixth Form) as appropriate. Fees for late entries are passed back to the department.

Directors of Subjects must ensure that the exam office is advised of the required entries by the published deadlines. It is the responsibility of the department to advise the Exams Manager of the correct Exam Board and entry code to ensure entries are made correctly. With unitised courses the department must advise codes for both course registration and unit entries by the appropriate deadline. Any late fees will be passed back to the department.

### 6.1 Resits

All students who do not achieve Grade 4 at GCSE in Year 11 in English and/or Maths are expected to resit these qualifications if joining our Sixth Form. Time will be included in students' timetables to accommodate this. In other subjects, where resit of a module is possible within an academic year, students will be expected to undertake this if it is felt a higher grade is likely to be achieved. Fortis Academy does not support, or fund, resits of any other kinds, eg a Sixth Form student wanting to resit another GCSE subject. If it is necessary to resit English and/ or Maths for a further time Fortis Academy does not fund this.

## 7. Exam Fees

GCSE and A Level candidates may be charged:

- If a student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of a public exam where the school originally paid the entry fee;
- Withdrawal from an exam (where charges would be applied by an exam board), if the parent requests withdrawal

The charges for this will be equivalent to full cost recovery for the academy, dependent upon the charges levied by the exam board.

## 8. Equalities

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

We will comply with the legislation, including making reasonable adjustments to the service that we provide to candidates in accordance with the requirements defined by the legislation, awarding bodies, and JCQ. This is the responsibility of the head of centre, exams officer and the SENDCo.

## 9. 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 as per 2.6 above.

Ensuring there is appropriate evidence for a candidate's access arrangement is the responsibility of the SENDCo and teachers. Room arrangements for candidates using access arrangements will be organised by the exams officer.

Invigilation and support for candidates using access arrangements, as defined in the JCQ [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020-2021](#), will be organised by the exams officer and lead invigilator.

## 10. Contingency Planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Head of Centre supported by the Deputy Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher (Sixth Form). Contingency plans are available via e-mail and school intranet and are in line with the [guidance provided by Ofqual, JCQ](#) and awarding organisations.

## 11. Estimated Grades

Subject teachers are responsible for submitting estimated grades to the data manager when requested.

## 12. Managing Invigilators

External staff will be used to invigilate examinations. Although, we may use internal staff for PPEs and external examinations in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Manager and Human Resources Manager. If invigilators require Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, the Human Resources Manager is responsible for obtaining these.

DBS fees are paid by the centre. Invigilators rates of pay are set by the Head of Centre. Invigilators are recruited, timetabled, trained and briefed by the Exams Manager and the lead invigilator.

The Exam Officer is responsible for producing the Invigilator rota for exam days and the pay roll spreadsheet. This must be provided to the Exam Manager in good time for overview and sign off.

## 13. Malpractice

The head of centre, in consultation with the Exams Manager, is responsible for ensuring that suspected malpractice is thoroughly investigated.

## 14. Exam Days

The exams officer will:

- Book all exam rooms (after liaising with other relevant users)
- Make question papers, exam stationary and materials available for the invigilator

Site management staff will:

- Set up the allocated rooms, and will be advised of requirements in advance.
- Ensure the room and equipment is fit for purpose and of the required standard
- The invigilators and the exams officer will start and finish all exams in accordance with [JCQ guidelines](#).

Procedures to verify the identity of all candidates at the time of the examination or assessment:

- 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](#).
- Photo desk cards are placed on all desks to further assist the identification of candidates.

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 after candidates have completed them.

## 15. Candidates

The Exams Manager will provide written information to candidates in advance of each exam series. A formal briefing session for candidates may be given by the Exams Manager.

Our published rules on acceptable dress and behaviour apply at all times. Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and we accept 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 stationary list, or the specification for that subject. This is particularly true of mobile phones, smart watches and other electronic devices with text or digital facilities. Any precluded items must not be taken into the exam room. Mobile phones must be switched off, placed in the plastic wallet provided and be handed in to the Invigilator for safe storage, as must smart watches.

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 Manager. 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 and ensuring that attendance records are kept. Candidates are not allowed to leave the exam room for the first hour of the exam.

### 15.1 Clash candidates

The exams officer will be responsible for making arrangements for clash candidates, including:

- Supervising escorts
- Identifying a secure venue
- Arranging overnight stays where necessary

## 16. Special Consideration

If a candidate is unable to attend an exam because of illness, bereavement, or other trauma, or if a candidate becomes ill or otherwise disadvantaged during an exam, they are responsible for alerting the invigilators, the exams manager or the head of centre to that effect. The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within 5 days of the exam. The exams manager will make a special consideration application

to the relevant awarding body within the timescales laid down by the exam board. The Head of Centre must oversee and support all applications.

## **17. Despatch of Scripts**

It is the duty of Directors of Subject 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 internally assessed work must be keyed on by subject teachers via the Director of Subject within the required timescales.

The exams officer will inform staff of the deadline date for appeals against internal assessments.

For external assessments the Exam Officer is responsible for checking and despatching scripts on the day of the examination and retaining attendance registers and evidence of despatch.

## **18. Results and Certificates**

Candidates will receive individual results slips on results days by collecting these in person. Where a candidate is not able to collect their results in person they may inform the centre in writing prior to the date and either nominate a parent/carer/relative to collect their results or provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope and request postage.

The person nominated to collect the results must bring photo ID with them.

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

Dates of results days each year will be publicised for all candidates through the school website, information direct to students and sent home.

### **18.1 Enquiries about results (EARs)**

EARs may be requested by centre 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 a group of candidates.

The cost of EARs will be paid by the person requesting the remark, where this is centre staff this cost will be met by the school, where a candidate/parent requests a remark against the advice of the academy, the cost will be met by the candidate/parent. With the exception of some English and Maths requests, the cost will come from the department budget. The cost of EARs will be that imposed by the Examining Body.

All decisions about whether to make an application for an EAR will be made by Directors of Subject with overall approval from the Deputy Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher (Sixth Form) as appropriate. If a candidate's request for an EAR is not supported, the candidate may appeal and we will respond by following the process in our internal appeals procedure document.

All processing of EARs will be the responsibility of the Exams Manager, following the JCQ guidance.

### **18.2 Access to Scripts (ATS)**

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of written exam papers within 5 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. Applications for EARs cannot be submitted once an original script has been returned. The exams officer is responsible for processing requests for ATS. The cost of ATS will be paid by the centre where these are requested by centre staff, or the candidate/parent where they request it. The cost of ATS will be that imposed by the Examining Body.

### **18.3 Certificates**

Exam Certificates are distributed at our annual Certificate Evening which is usually held in December. Once this date has passed, they are available for collection from the Exam Office.

Candidates must bring proof of ID when collecting certificates.

Where a candidate is not able to collect their certificates in person they may inform the centre in writing prior to the collection date and either nominate a parent/carer/relative to collect their results or provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope and request postage. The person nominated to collect the results must bring photo ID with them. Any requests for postage are done so at the candidates own risk and the Academy holds no responsibility for any certificates which get lost in the post.

The Awarding Bodies have agreed to implement a standard procedure for dealing with unclaimed certificates.

Centres may destroy any unclaimed certificates by a secure method (for example by shredding or incineration) after holding them for a period of 12 months from the date of issue. A record of all certificates destroyed by a centre should be kept for a further period of four years from the date of their destruction. The Academy holds no responsibility for any certificates not collected within 12 months.

## **19. Monitoring and Review**

The head of centre is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed and updated annually on the publication of updated JCQ regulations and guidance on access arrangements and instructions for conducting exams. References in this policy to AA and ICE relate to/are directly taken from the [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments 2020-2021](#) and [Instructions for Conducting Examinations 2020-2021](#) publications