



Exams Procedure (Including Enquiries about Results)

School Name: Birch Wood School

Policy owner: Philip Leaney

Date Ratified by Chair of Governors: 2016

Review Date: September 2025

PURPOSE

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 Birch Wood School's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

Birch Wood School is committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity in everything that it does and to ensuring differences between all our learners and staff are valued and respected.

Exam Responsibilities

Executive Head of Birch Wood School:

- Has overall responsibility for the school as an exam centre.
- Advises on appeals and re-marks
- Responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document, 'Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments'
- Ensure that supply staff acting as invigilators are competent and fully trained, understanding what is and is not permissible.

Heads of School:

- Organisation of teaching and learning
- Advises on External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4/Post 16.

Curriculum Co-ordinators/Subject Teachers:

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries.
- Involvement in post results procedures
- Accurate completion of coursework/controlled assessment mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other marks sheets and adherence to deadlines asset by the Exams Officer.
- Administration of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to Exams Officer.

Lead Invigilator/Invigilators:

- Attend training.
- Collection of exam papers and other material from the exams office before the start of the exam.
- Preparing the Exam Venues on the morning of the exam in readiness for the Candidates in line with JCQ regulations.

- Assuring exams are run in accordance with the regulations of the JCQ.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and return them to the Exams Office.
- Undertake any post exam administration as requested by the Exams Officer e.g. checking registers and packing exams scripts to be sent off for marking.
- Ensure all candidates have removed their wristwatches and left them outside the examination room with a member of staff to be locked away.

Candidates:

- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework/controlled assessment as their own.
- The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE/Vocational as appropriate.
- Decisions on whether a candidate should not take an individual subject or all NCTs will be taken in consultation with the candidates, parents/carers, SENCO, subject teachers, Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for exams.

Exams Officer:

- Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results.
- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, Subject and Class teachers and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various Exam Boards.
- Ensure each candidate has a Unique Candidate Number (UCN) and that if they have transferred from another school, that their UCN continues to be used and a new one not set up.
- Oversees the production and distribution of an annual calendar, for all exams in which Candidates will be involved, to staff and candidates.
- Communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events.
- Ensures that candidates are informed of, and understand, those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them.
- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework/controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries.
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts in conjunction with designated staff within the office (including Finance Officer, Business Manager and Office Manager).
- Ensures access arrangements are administered and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access Arrangements and Special Considerations Regulations booklet (in conjunction with the Designated Person for Access Arrangements).
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes.
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges.
- Line manages a team of exams invigilators responsible for the conduct of exams including organising the recruitment, training and monitoring of said team. Train invigilators and retain a record of this training on file until the deadline for enquiries about results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later. This includes ensuring they fully understand the role of scribe, prompter or reader and what is/is not permissible in the exam room.
- Maintains signed records of the seating plan, the invigilation arrangements and Birch Wood's copies of attendance for each examination until the deadline for enquiries about results has

passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.

- Prepares and presents reports to the SLT showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made.
- Submits candidates' coursework/controlled assessment marks, tracks despatch and stores returned coursework/controlled assessments 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 the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests.
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.
- Annually check for and amend recommendations made by JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) and disseminate information as appropriate.

Exam Seasons and Timetables

Exam Season

- Internal exams are scheduled throughout the year and on a year by year basis.
- External exams are scheduled in June in line with Subject teacher requirements and national exam availability.

Timetables

- Once confirmed, the exams officer will circulate the exam timetables for both internal and external exams.
- Students will be given an individualised timetable.
- Subject teachers will be given a timetable showing all exams timetabled.

Entries, Entry Details and Late Entries

- Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Subject teacher.
- Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.
- The Centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

Exam Fees

- The centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates.
- Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the centre
- Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier or withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies. Any penalties applied by an awarding body will be charged to the department involved if these have resulted from failure to meet internal deadlines.

Access Arrangements

- Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Designated Person Responsible for Access Arrangements and the exams officer.

- Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies and maintaining a record of the outcome is the responsibility of the Designated Person Responsible for Access Arrangements.
- Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the Designated Person Responsible for Access Arrangements with the exams officer.
- Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Designated Person Responsible for Access Arrangements with the exams officer.

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 invigilator.
- Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms as instructed by the Exams Officer.
- The Lead Invigilator will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.
- In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties in accordance with JCQ regulations.
- Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session.

Candidates, Special Consideration and Clash Candidates

Candidates

- The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and all 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 may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff/invigilator must accompany them.
- The Exams Officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of the exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Special Consideration

- Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert the centre, the Exams Officer or the Exams Invigilator to that effect.
- The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example a letter from the candidate's doctor.
- The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Clash Candidates

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

Coursework/Controlled Assessments

- Candidates who have to prepare coursework/controlled assessments should do so by the end of the course.
- Curriculum Directors will ensure all coursework/controlled assessment is conducted and stored in accordance with JCQ regulations and is ready for despatch by the Exams Officer at the correct time. The Exams Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.
- Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are given to the Exams Office by the Curriculum Directors.

Appeals Against Internal Assessments

Appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded;

- Candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification;
- The Headteacher's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

Results, Enquiries About Results (EARs) and Access to Scripts (ATS)

Results:

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

Arrangements for the School to be open on results days are made by the school leadership team. Parents and students will be made aware on results day the services that are available to them if they are not entirely satisfied with their child's results. This will include information regarding clerical rechecks, re marking of papers. Parents will also be advised that grades can go down as well as up or may remain unchanged.

EARs and ATS:

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Principal of Centre will investigate the feasibility of asking for a remark at the centre's expense.

When the Centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

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

GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

Certificates

Certificates are collected at from the school or can be posted to those students as requested.

If, after the Certificates have been given over to the candidates, a certificate become lost or damaged, it is the responsibility of the candidate to contact the appropriate Exam Board to obtain a replacement and to pay the costs incurred.